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NOTE

Origine:	la présidence
Destinataire:	Comité spéciale Agriculture
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Objet:	Travaux futurs du Comité spécial Agriculture

L'annexe à cette note reprend une suggestion de la présidence pour des lignes directrices de Strasbourg pour compléter celles adoptées à Riga en 2015.

STRASBOURG GUIDELINES

The Presidency suggests the adoption of guidelines on the future work of the SCA to complement those adopted in Riga in 2015 (doc. 9113/15) to codify and enhance the efficiency of the SCA's deliberations on developments on agricultural markets and in international trade. Nothing in these guidelines should be construed as derogating from the Council's Rules of Procedure and notably from Article 3 thereof.

The Riga guidelines contain a section 5 on international trade, but they include no reference to the agricultural market situation. The creation, as part of the CAP reform, of a legal basis for the Commission's regular reports on the market situation (Article 222b(2) of Regulation (EU) 1308/2013) justifies a review of the guidelines.

As regards agri-food trade, the SCA notes that the Council's Trade Policy Committee remains the competent committee on agricultural trade matters.

The following Strasbourg guidelines therefore amend the Riga guidelines as follows:

(1) A new section 5 is added:

“5. AGRICULTURAL MARKET SITUATION

To enable the Commission to provide information on the market situation (as required under Article 222b(2) of Regulation (EU) 1308/2013 establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products), and delegations to make comments, raise concerns and have an exchange of views, the SCA should regularly review developments on agricultural markets, whether with a view to preparing for, or following up to, an AGRIFISH Council meeting or as a free-standing item.

Without prejudice to Article 3 of the Council's Rules of Procedure, the SCA recommends that presidencies include an agricultural market situation item on the Council agenda at least twice during each semester, or more often if the situation calls for it.

When the Presidency plans to include such an item on the agenda of an upcoming Council meeting, it would invite delegations to indicate the issues that their ministers intend to raise for discussion and which they would like the Commission to address. Those issues should be of general and strategic interest for the agricultural market situation in the Union as a whole and substantiated in writing.

Delegations should send any such written contributions to the General Secretariat of the Council (GSC). The GSC would circulate a compilation of those written contributions and take them into account when preparing the background note for the Council.¹

- (2) The **following paragraph is added to the former section 5, which becomes section 6:**

“The guidelines set out in section 5 should also be considered in respect of regular discussions on international trade.”.

- (3) The Annex to this note contains the **consolidated text** of the resulting Riga/Strasbourg guidelines.²

¹ The GSC will make sure that the key issues raised in this manner receive the same communication attention as is currently the case for “other business” items.

² The new elements are in ***bold italics***. The only other change made (other than editorial ones) is to align the first paragraph of section 1 with the footnote on the origin of the SCA that appears in the documents listing the Council’s preparatory bodies (the most recent of which is doc. 5253/22).

FUTURE WORK OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

1. INTRODUCTION

The Special Committee on Agriculture (SCA) was established by a decision of the Council of 20 July 1960. The Council confirmed its mandate as formulated in the decision of the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on 12 May 1960 to prepare decisions of the Agriculture Council.

Since then, the SCA played a major role in preparation of the Agriculture Council and its decisions on the Common Agriculture Policy. The aforementioned decision and the Working Methods agreed in 2003 (doc. 9468/03) and last complemented and updated in 2010 (doc. 5952/10) remain the basis for the SCA's work today.

As in 2003, due to budgetary and practical constraints, we assume that the SCA will not meet more often or for longer than it has done recently. It thus remains essential that the SCA work as efficiently as possible, in particular by avoiding undue repetition or duplication in its deliberations, and by using written communication where appropriate. To that end, it remains essential that delegations carry out efficient internal coordination before meetings of the relevant Working Parties, the SCA and the Council.

For work on legislative proposals falling within its competence the SCA shall continue to proceed in accordance with the established practice.

This document emphasises some of the aspects where the work of the SCA could be developed in the future, providing added value to the work carried out in other fora. This could also help in structuring the contribution of the SCA to the setting of the agenda of the Agriculture Council.

The elements that are described in this document do not put into question the roles of any other Council formation and Committees³ nor any Council conclusions that establish how Council organises its work⁴.

2. DELEGATED ACTS

The Presidency could invite the Commission to give an indication to the SCA of the delegated acts that it expects to adopt at a later stage. Bearing in mind the need to preserve the efficiency of the proceedings of the SCA, the Presidency could then suggest which delegated acts should be the subject of a debate and/or short presentation at the first possible SCA after the adoption of that delegated act but before the expiration of the 2 months deadline. In any event, written information on each delegated act would continue to be provided at the start of the consultation period. Besides, under the item "Organisation of future work" the Presidency will remind delegations of the launch of consultations on delegated acts. If necessary, the Commission could also provide an update should unforeseen events require the adoption of additional delegated acts, or modifications to existing ones.

Such a SCA-level discussion would usefully complement the existing procedures for consultations on and scrutiny of specific delegated acts, in full respect of Article 290 TFEU, the Common understanding on delegated acts (doc. 8753/11) and the Initiative to complement the Common understanding as regards the consultation of experts (doc. 6774/14).

³ such as the special committee designated by the Council in accordance with art. 218(4) TFEU for the follow-up to negotiations on agricultural trade issues.

⁴ such as those (7515/00 + COR 1) on improving the examination of special reports drawn up by the Court of Auditors.

3. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS AND OPINIONS OF THE COURT OF AUDITORS

In accordance with the general guidance on impact assessments (doc. 6270/18), the first report on a legislative proposal from the relevant Working Party to the SCA should include a concise summary of the Working Party discussions on the Commission's impact assessment including, in particular, any concerns raised. The SCA could, as appropriate, discuss any such concerns.

When the Commission presents a major legislative proposal with a potentially significant impact, the Presidency could consider inviting the Commission to present the impact assessment to the SCA before work starts within the Working Party.

The SCA could also give its view on the opinion of the Court of Auditors on files that are of major importance and have future potential implications on the CAP, therefore further improving the quality of the Council's work on these dossiers.

4. INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Currently the Commission represents the EU in three international organisations dealing with products covered by the CAP.

Responsibility for the EU's participation in the International Olive Oil Council (IOC), the International Sugar Council (ISO) and the International Grain Council (IGC) lies with Commission's DG AGRI. Preparatory discussions take place within the Council's Working Party on Commodities ("PROBA"), which reports to Coreper and prepares meetings of organisations where the EU participates for international development purposes.

To complement these existing procedures, but without interfering with them, the Presidency could regularly invite the Commission to provide information to the SCA before international meetings where important issues are at stake.

In addition, the SCA should continue to prepare and approve positions on technical/organisational issues for meetings of the International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV) after discussion in the relevant Council Working Party. The SCA may also consider doing the same for the International Olive Council (IOC).

5. AGRICULTURAL MARKET SITUATION

To enable the Commission to provide information on the market situation (as required under Article 222b(2) of Regulation (EU) 1308/2013 establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products), and delegations to make comments, raise concerns and have an exchange of views, the SCA should regularly review developments on agricultural markets, whether with a view to preparing for, or following up to, an AGRIFISH Council meeting or as a free-standing item.

Without prejudice to Article 3 of the Council's Rules of Procedure, the SCA recommends that presidencies include an agricultural market situation item on the Council agenda at least twice during each semester, or more often if the situation calls for it.

When the Presidency plans to include such an item on the agenda of an upcoming Council meeting, it would invite delegations to indicate the issues that their ministers intend to raise for discussion and which they would like the Commission to address. Those issues should be of general and strategic interest for the agricultural market situation in the Union as a whole and substantiated in writing.

Delegations should send any such written contributions to the General Secretariat of the Council (GSC). The GSC would circulate a compilation of such written contributions and take them into account when preparing the background note for the Council.⁵

6. INTERNATIONAL TRADE ISSUES

As one of the Council preparatory bodies for agricultural issues, it is appropriate for the SCA to have a clear picture of the potential consequences of ongoing trade negotiations for the CAP.

The Presidency should regularly invite the Commission to inform the SCA on developments in trade negotiations, with the involvement of DG AGRI to comment on the potential impact on the CAP, followed by a debate. The Commission could also provide an update during the semester.

⁵ The GSC will make sure that the key issues raised in this manner receive the same communication attention as is currently the case for "other business" items.

This would usefully complement the existing procedures but would in no way reduce the need for effective internal coordination within delegations.

The guidelines set out in section 5 should also be considered in respect of regular discussions on international trade.

7. **HORIZONTAL ISSUES**

The SCA should be responsible for preparing the AGRIFISH Council's contribution to the European Council for key horizontal issues that have direct and significant impact on agriculture such as the climate and energy strategy, the Europe 2020 strategy and the Investment Plan for Europe.
