Conseil de
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NOTE

Origine:	Présidence
Destinataire:	Comité spécial Agriculture
N° doc. Cion:	15045/21
Objet:	Communication de la Commission européenne relative aux cycles de carbone durables dans les secteurs agricole et forestier *- Projet révisé de conclusions du Conseil*

Les délégations trouveront en Annexe un projet révisé de conclusions du Conseil sur la Communication de la Commission européenne relative aux cycles de carbone durables dans les secteurs agricole et forestier, rédigé par la présidence à la suite des observations formulées par les délégations.

Par rapport au projet initial (5941/22), les passages ajoutés sont indiqués en caractères **gras soulignés**, tandis que les passages supprimés sont indiqués en caractères ~~barrés~~.

ANNEXE

DRAFT

Council conclusions for agriculture and forestry on the European Commission's communication on sustainable carbon cycles ~~in agriculture and forestry sectors~~

The Council of the European Union,

RECALLING:

- the Council conclusions of 15 November 2021 on the ~~n~~New EU Forest Strategy for 2030[1],
- the Council conclusions of 10 June 2021 on the new EU strategy on adaptation to climate change[2],
- the Council conclusions of 19 October 2020 on the "Farm to Fork" strategy[3],
- the Council conclusions of 29 November 2019 on the updated bioeconomy strategy[4],
- **the Council conclusions of 23 October 2020 on biodiversity and the need for urgent action[5],**

(1) WELCOMES the European Commission's communication entitled "Sustainable carbon cycles".

1 Doc. 13537/21
2 Doc. 9694/21
3 Doc. 12099/20
4 Doc. 14594/19
5 **Doc. 11829/20**

(2) ~~RECALLS~~ **EMPHASISES** the particularities of ~~the~~ agricultur**e**~~al~~ and forestry ~~sectors~~ in the consideration of climate issues. **Agriculture and f**~~F~~orest~~s~~**ry** ~~and agriculture must participate in~~ **have to contribute to** the ~~European Union's~~ overall effort to reduce emissions, **which must remain the primary focus of European Union's climate neutrality objective,** and at the same time~~,~~ they are the only sectors ~~capable~~ **with the potential** ~~of~~ **to** absorb~~ing~~ **and store** carbon through ~~natural sinks~~ **carbon pools** (forests**, forest soils** and wood products, grasslands, agroforestry, agricultural soils, wetlands, etc.).

(3) ~~RECALLS~~ **HIGHLIGHTS** that the objective of **sustainable** food production remains the primary objective of the agricultural sector**. STRESSES the importance of forests and their sustainable management as they fulfil multiple goals, including the maintenance and enhancement of biomass production and their contribution to bioeconomy.** ~~and~~ EMPHASISES that ~~the~~ agricultur**e**~~al~~ and forest**s**~~ry~~ ~~sectors~~ are also ~~strongly subject to the effects of~~ **significantly affected by** climate change, which **influences the storage potential and** makes ~~the overall~~ **it necessary to** adapt~~ation of~~ production systems ~~necessary~~ **and to increase the resilience of ecosystems**.

(4) ~~SHARES~~ **RECOGNISES** ~~the fact~~ that, in order to achieve the ~~European~~ Union's climate objectives, in addition to the legislative work in progress on the "Fit for 55" package, it is appropriate that voluntary incentives at the level of land managers are promoted to **strengthen the Union's carbon sinks by** sustainably ~~store~~ **storing** more carbon in ~~soils and in~~ agricultural**,** ~~and~~ forest **and other natural** ecosystems and ~~protect~~ **maintain** the existing carbon stocks, and WELCOMES in this respect the ~~fact that~~ **intention to extend** financial support ~~can come~~ **including** from the private sector in addition to **the Common Agricultural Policy – which supports a broad range of carbon farming, carbon sequestration and other climate mitigation practices – and other** public support~~, including from the CAP~~.

(5) SUPPORTS the approach of conceiving carbon farming as a new **voluntary** ~~economic and ecological~~ **green business** model, capable of providing an additional source of income for land managers, and encourages its deployment on ~~European~~ **the Union's** territory; EMPHASISES, however, that the **land** manager's remuneration must provide sufficient incentives **while avoiding significant negative impacts and changes in land use, such as by making land less affordable and available for farmers**.

(6) EMPHASISES the need for **targeted information and** ~~an adequate~~ advisory service**s**, including in the framework of existing policies and programmes, to promote knowledge transfer and training of **land managers and other** stakeholders. **Fostering research and innovation activities could help achieve these goals.**

(7) ~~EMPHASISES~~ **RECALLS** that **at EU level,** ~~carbon dioxide (CO_2) represents only 17%~~ **methane (CH_4) represents 56% and nitrous oxide (N_20) 39%** of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions ~~for the agricultural sector~~ **in agricultural production**, ~~compared to more than 80% for nitrous oxide (N_2O) and methane (CH_4)~~ **while carbon dioxide (CO_2) represents a minor proportion of GHG emissions**[6]. Moreover, ~~RECOGNISES~~ **TAKES NOTE** that ~~a joint management of nitrogen and carbon in agricultural soils~~ **certain agricultural practices which may increase carbon sequestration can at the same time result in higher N_2O emissions and that it** should be considered with regard to climate objectives~~, taking into account the possible conflicts between optimising carbon sequestration and reducing N_2O emissions~~.

(8) Consequently, RECOGNISES the ~~interest~~ **potential benefit** of an integrated approach ~~of~~ **to** carbon farming that ~~includes~~ **considers** all GHG emissions ~~from the agricultural sector~~, and INVITES the Commission to consider broadening the scope of its future reflections, bearing in mind that it would ~~also~~ increase the incentive given to land managers **and make a positive contribution to reduction in GHG emissions at farm level**.

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[6] **Data for 2019 based on EU greenhouse gas inventories-27, European Environment Agency (EEA). These data do not include the emissions from energy consumption in the agricultural production. The detailed methodology is available in the set of indicators "Greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture in Europe" published by the EEA on 15 December 2021.**

(9) CONSIDERS that the examples of practices identified by the Commission in its Communication as favourable to carbon storage in soils and ecosystems are relevant, but EMPHASISES ~~that~~ the **need to take into account the** ~~diversity of~~ **diverse conditions of** ~~each~~ Member State**s,** ~~and of the different European~~ **their** regions ~~must be taken into account~~ when assessing ~~climate friendly~~ **mitigation** practices**. However, STRESSES that carbon farming practices need to adhere to** ~~and their~~ environmental integrity**, in particular, avoiding negative effects on biodiversity**.

~~(10)~~ In th**ise** light**,** ~~of the diversities mentioned in the previous point,~~ ENCOURAGES the Commission**, in cooperation with Member States,** to ~~complete in a more exhaustive way~~ **further extend** the list of practices **set out in the communication** that ~~are the object of a~~ **are favourable to climate, based on current** European scientific consensus ~~for climate action~~.

(~~11~~**10**) RECOGNISES the existence of co-benefits associated with the above-mentioned practices, ~~in particular with regard~~ **which may contribute in particular** to the preservation of biodiversity, ~~and~~ **as well as of** water**, soil** and air quality.

(~~12~~**11**) SUPPORTS the Commission's ~~proposal~~ **intention** to define a robust certification framework based on standardised and validated scientific methods and diagnostic instruments at the European level for monitoring, reporting and verifying the volumes of carbon stored and emitted **and SUGGESTS that such framework include a requirement for the Commission to conduct an independent verification of the progress achieved on carbon farming, and report on it**~~,~~**. UNDERLINES that, to** ~~,thus~~ ensur**e**~~ing its~~ **the** credibility **of this framework, high-quality criteria such as transparency, additionality, permanence and the avoidance of negative impacts on the environment should be at its core, and it should not discourage any current effort from land managers**.

(~~13~~**12**) EMPHASISES that this future certification framework should be simple**,** ~~and transparent~~ **should not cause disproportionate administrative burden** in order to facilitate ~~its appropriation~~ **the participation** by land managers **and should not result in sanctions in case of extreme weather events that may lead to reduced carbon sequestration**.

(~~14~~**13**) SUPPORTS the **timely** setting up of a ~~European~~ **Union** expert group **consisting of Member States' representatives including from forestry and agriculture** to assist the Commission in taking into account existing best practices on carbon farming. This group could, in particular, help the Commission study all the **existing international and** national systems for accounting the GHG emission reductions and carbon storage in ~~the~~ agricultur~~al~~**e** and forestry ~~sectors~~, as well as the carbon certification systems that already exist.

(~~15~~**14**) ~~RECALLS~~ **EMPHASISES** that the certification framework will have to incorporate the necessary flexibilities to take into account the specificities of Member States **and their regions,** and production systems~~,~~ **(**including **the size of** ~~small~~ farms**, parcels and forests, climatic conditions, soil types and cultivation practices)**, without compromising the environmental integrity of the scheme.

(~~16~~**15**) EMPHASISES that the regulatory framework for certification should be implemented in full coherence with other ~~European~~ **Union** policies, **avoiding double counting, carbon leakage, and without undermining the objective of food security** ~~and RECOGNISES its importance in achieving the European Union's climate neutrality objectives by 2050~~.

(~~17~~**16**) ~~INSISTS that~~ **ASKS FOR** the future ~~European~~ **Union** certification framework **to** be designed taking into account and, if possible, **to be** compatible with existing national initiatives sharing the same objective.

(~~18~~**17**) ~~WISHES that~~ **INVITES the Commission to explore how** the **Union** ~~European~~ certification framework ~~would~~**could** cover a wider range of practices ~~covering~~ **including** all GHG **emissions** and ~~would if possible include~~ **possibly** the economic value of co-benefits~~;~~ ~~INVITES the Commission to specify the nature of these co-benefits and to assess how they could be taken into account~~ without compromising the simplicity and clarity of the system.

(~~19~~**18**) INVITES the ~~European~~ Commission to take into account the elements set out in these conclusions**, specifically** when drafting its legislative proposal for the establishment of a ~~European~~ **Union** certification framework.