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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Delegations

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Subject: The EU reduction target for 2040 and the agricultural sector  
- *Information from the Polish delegation*

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With a view to an ‘any other business’ item at the meeting of the Council (‘Agriculture and Fisheries’) on 26 February 2024, delegations will find in the Annex a note from the Polish delegation on the above-mentioned issue.

**The EU reduction target for 2040 and the agricultural sector**  
**Information from the Polish delegation**

In meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement, the EU has adopted binding greenhouse gas emission reduction targets for 2030 and 2050, as well as a legislative package implementing the climate targets (the so-called Fit for 55 package), which affect various sectors, including agriculture and the agri-food industry.

The Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the European Union's 2040 climate target proposal was published on February 6. It presents three options with different levels of ambition: (1) a target of up to 80%; (2) at least 85% and a maximum of 90%; (3) at least 90% and a maximum of 95%. The Commission recommends an intermediate target of 90% for 2040.

The 2040 target should combine the level of ambition with the real possibility of achieving it at the level of the EU as a whole, but also of individual member states.

Contrary to previous plans, the European Commission has not set a specific reduction target for the agricultural sector, but the establishment of such a high overall target, for all sectors of the economy will also force adaptations in agriculture.

It should be remembered that reducing emissions in agriculture is particularly difficult because of the close relationship between the biological processes that determine agricultural production and emissions. The main sources of emissions in agriculture are fertilization and enteric fermentation of livestock, so a significant reduction in emissions is not possible without a reduction in fertilization or livestock, and this means a reduction of agricultural production. This has direct implications for food security and dependence on external sources of supply, and the emergence of the so-called "carbon leakage" phenomenon.

It should be recalled that the 2014 European Council Conclusions stipulate<sup>1</sup> that coherence between the EU's food security and climate change objectives should be ensured. Therefore, climate objectives must not lead to a reduction in agricultural production, as food security in the EU will be undermined.

In Poland's view, the discussion of the 2040 reduction target, which begins at this point, should first note that the agricultural sector, due to its specific function, must be treated in a special way, guaranteeing the maintenance of production capacity.

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<sup>1</sup> Conclusions of the European Council adopted at its meeting on 23 and 24 October 2014 (EUCO 169/14).