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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 27 April 2026:
The role of peat in achieving EU food security
- Information from Latvia and Finland

In Northern Europe, particularly in Scandinavia and the Baltic States, peat is an important local natural resource, as the humid and cold climate, along with specific soil formation conditions, promote its natural accumulation in bogs and wetlands. This creates a unique organic substrate that differs significantly in its physical and chemical properties from other European soils.

Peat is a strategically important resource to produce high-quality forest reproductive material and horticultural substrates in EU markets. It supports forests in adapting to climate change and contributes to ensuring food security, also in times of crisis.

Latvia and Finland emphasise that peat is strategically important and currently technically irreplaceable in horticulture and in the production of forest reproductive material. In addition, peat is used as bedding material for animals and flooring in e.g. poultry houses with positive effects to animal welfare. Peat products can also be used to improve soil quality. They also call for recognition of this resource's significant contribution to the implementation of the objectives of the Common Agricultural Policy and the EU Forest Policy, including in the context of food security, sustainable forest management, and regional development.

Latvia and Finland call for ensuring a gradual, balanced, and evidence-based policy for peat use, aligned with the best available scientific knowledge and considering the socio-economic impacts in the Member States.

It is important to develop and make available on the market sustainable, functionally equivalent, and economically viable alternatives.

We call on the European Commission and the Member States to:

- significantly strengthen coordinated cooperation in the field of research and innovation, particularly regarding the comparability of scientific data, methodological alignment, and the aggregation of research results at EU level;
- ensure the systematic and timely transfer of these results to policymakers, building on existing EU and national initiatives, including *PeatTransform* and *OrgBalt*;
- support developing scientifically sound approaches to accounting for emissions from organic soils in the EU taking into account member state differences.