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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 26 May 2026:
Unprecedented situation in Slovak agriculture caused by extreme drought
- *Information from Slovakia*

Slovakia would like to draw attention to the exceptionally serious situation in the agricultural sector caused by drought and the extreme deficit of precipitation, which have affected basically the entire territory of Slovakia in recent months. The current agro-climatic development represents one of the most severe periods of drought in recent decades and is causing significant economic damage across crop and livestock production.

The drought became increasingly apparent already during the winter period and subsequently deepened dramatically during March and April. April 2026 was historically the driest April since measurements began in 1881, while at several meteorological stations practically no precipitation was recorded.

The period from December 2025 until the end of April 2026 was deficient across the entire territory of Slovakia. In most areas, precipitation reached only 40 to 70% of the long-term average, while in some areas it fell significantly below 40%.

Severe or extreme level of drought currently affects more than 60% of the territory of Slovakia and in several highly productive regions it has reached critical intensity. The situation is manifested by the extreme lack of soil moisture, low soil saturation and worsening conditions for vegetation and agricultural production.

The impacts of drought are already being reflected in primary agricultural production. All sectors of primary agricultural production are significantly affected, including arable crops, fruit and vegetables, viticulture, hops and the forage base for livestock production.

In the cereals and oilseeds sector, growers in some regions already expect a decline in winter crop yields of 20–30%, while farmers warn that each additional week without precipitation may result in a further yield decrease of approximately 10%. In the case of potatoes, a production drop of 30 to 50% of the total yield is expected and losses in the sugar beet sector at this stage are reaching almost 50%. In viticulture, the sector expects losses of young vineyards at approximately 30%, while the drought will also result in lower yields per hectare and reduced wine production. In the livestock sector, a shortage of forage is evident, followed by rising prices and declining pasture quality, with a negative impact on animal productivity and reproductive indicators.

The situation is further aggravated by persistently high temperatures, strong winds increasing water evaporation, minimal winter moisture reserves, as well as low irrigation availability. Many farmers are forced to irrigate crops earlier than in the past, including crops that historically were not irrigated, which dramatically increases production costs. In addition, current problems resulting from the geopolitical situation are contributing to rising energy, fuel and other input costs, further worsening the exceptionally difficult conditions faced by primary producers in Slovakia.

However, the drought does not only affect agriculture, but also significantly increases the risk of fires. The moisture content of natural combustible material has decreased significantly. It is only at the level of 6–10% across almost the entire territory of Slovakia, which poses a high risk of fire occurrence.

The scale and intensity of drought represent an unprecedented situation for Slovak agriculture. Slovakia is continuously monitoring the situation and will continue collecting data on the extent of the damage. The total economic damage cannot yet be definitively quantified, as the vegetation period is still ongoing and the situation continues to evolve. However, it is already clear today that the impacts of drought will be exceptionally severe and that measures to support the agricultural sector and compensate for the damages incurred will need to be adopted.

Against this backdrop, Slovakia calls on the European Commission to be prepared to respond flexibly to further developments and to activate the agricultural reserve in order to help producers affected by extreme drought and mitigate the economic impacts of this climate crisis on agricultural production and food security.
