

**Conference "Climate Change: Towards an ambitious agreement in
Copenhagen?" 19 November 2009**

**Copa-Cogeca's presentation
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- Thank you chairman, good afternoon ladies and gentlemen.

And thank you for giving the Copa-Cogeca the opportunity to present our position on climate change today. On behalf of Mr Gouveia I apologise for his absence but he has been requested in an important internal meeting this morning.

We are tackling a really big challenge, which is climate change, but to explain our position in 5 minutes is also a challenge!

Seriously, it is an honour to be here and to share with you our thoughts, concerns and hopes for the future.

As a starting point, I would like to invite you to take a brochure from the table: you'll find our position paper which consists of a main document titled "*Agriculture and forestry contributing to the EU climate change roadmap to Copenhagen*" and 4 thematic info sheets complementing the first one. It is the result of a year of intense discussions. Due to the time constraints, I'll focus my short presentation on some key messages from European farmers and agri-cooperatives' side, and I'm convinced you will be interested in contrasting the figures and examples provided in the info sheets.

1. We are **fully aware of the high expectations from society on agriculture and forestry** to face climate change, and to further reduce GHG emissions, so it is very important for us to show that both sectors are willing to contribute to the solutions to the climate change challenge.
The order I'll follow:
 - How Copa-Cogeca sees the challenge of CC in addition to other current challenges
 - The synergies existing between adaptation and mitigation in both sectors
 - Some factors which may hamper the contribution of agriculture and forestry
 - A few concluding remarks

2. **Let me start by stating that climate change, food security and energy security are convergent drivers of sustainable agricultural production:**
 - On one side, the farming sector faces the global challenge of nearly doubling its production if it is to feed the projected world population by 2050 while increasing protein demand and changing consumption patterns.
 - And at the same time, farmers and forest producers see how:
 - price volatility, speculation and production costs increase

- there is an increasing global demand for renewable raw materials and energy
- climate change is expected to seriously jeopardise the production capacity of many EU regions,
- and pressure to use land to meet urban and transport needs is rising.

3. **It is therefore vital** among other things that effective tools to ensure food security and a stable policy framework are provided, and priority should be granted to so-called “no-regret” options providing economic and environmental benefits simultaneously and thus avoiding conflicts arising between the different objectives. **In this sense, Copa-Cogeca recognises the importance of integrating climate change aspects into all EU policies.** Whilst the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is not a European climate change policy it can, in combination with other measures, offer a framework for effective policy support and the tools and incentives required to address climate change.

In short, agriculture must be economically viable to be able to cope with climate change - this is important since agriculture and forestry activities - beyond the role of producer of food and other goods – deliver:

- environmental benefits
- landscape preservation
- employment opportunities
- and solutions to adapt to and to combat CC

4- It is important to focus on the synergies between climate change adaptation and mitigation, where the implementation of mitigation measures in agriculture and forestry can further decrease GHG emissions while production remains stable or even increases.

- a. In many cases, by their very nature, mitigation and adaptation in agriculture and forestry are interlinked by simultaneously addressing both challenges. **I would like to mention some elements in this perspective:**
- Carbon sequestration in vegetation and soils** to reduce atmospheric CO₂ and to increase soil organic matter
 - Resource use efficiency improvement: in energy, water and nutrients,** to abate GHG emissions and to adapt to the availability of natural resources
 - Improvements in livestock management** to reduce methane and nitrous oxide emissions while taking advantage of a high carbon sequestration potential of grassland
 - And the **Use of agricultural products for bio-energy production** to reduce fossil-fuel dependency and to mitigate GHG emissions

- v. **Substitution of fuel-derived industrial material by agricultural harvest products** to adapt by reducing the need for non-renewable sources
- vi. And **Other renewable energy services embedded within agricultural land use – example the** establishment of wind power and solar power plants on farms in some regions
- vii. And finally **Enhance ecosystems’ resilience which will** improve adaptation capacity of plants and to reduce need of energy-intensive inputs

5- It is then clear that farmers regularly adapt their management decisions and operations to natural elements due to the changing climate.

Farmers and forest producers work “with” and “into” nature. This means that they regularly have to adapt their management decisions and operations to natural elements due to the changing climate. **So early adaptation is essential.**

6- BUT the magnitude and complexity of weather-related phenomena present risks to European farming and forestry. These effects are felt much more strongly by the farming and forestry sectors than by other economic activities, and there are some factors which may hamper their contribution to combat CC.

7- At the same time it is important to underline that existing uncertainties concerning climate change and the complexity and scope of climate change exceed adaptation capacities of the single farmer:

- a. the pressure from climate change related issues are likely to lead:
 - to decreasing agricultural and forestry activities,
 - to a greater risk of yield and quality,
 - to employment losses in most European regions,
 - and to an increasing economic instability in farmers’ and forest producers’ economic situation.

8- Conversely, we also acknowledge the fact that the changing climate may open up opportunities for some regions, for example, to grow new crops or varieties. In short, the effects will tremendously vary between regions.

9- Agriculture nor forestry occur under clear, defined and controllable conditions, which makes it difficult to determine the adaptive capacity and the mitigation potential.

GHG emissions profile of agriculture is fundamentally different to that of other sectors. It differs from sectors such as industry, households and transport, as it is dominated by methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O). Methane arises from enteric fermentation by ruminant animals and from manures while the application of organic and inorganic fertilisers to soil can give rise to nitrous oxide. **The biological**

nature of agricultural emissions must not be disregarded when selecting suitable mitigation options.

10-Consequently, the absence of a methodology to distinguish between the impact of uncontrollable natural processes and those derived from anthropogenic activities, uncertainties on the current monitoring and accounting rules for the land-use, land-use change and forestry activities (LULUCF) continues to present a major challenge.

11-Copa-Cogeca believes that agriculture and forestry cannot be penalised for emissions arising from natural processes which are unrelated to management practices. For example, increasing temperatures and the greater likelihood of drought and water deficit will result in additional carbon being released from the soil. Separating such a natural effect from one of anthropogenic origins, e.g. tillage, is extremely complex and depends heavily on micro-climate and local hydro-geological conditions.

12-The conclusion from our side is that European agriculture is willing to play its part in contributing to a further reduction of greenhouse gases and further develop the mentioned synergies but binding sector-specific targets for agriculture are neither appropriate nor acceptable

13- I should also underline, that there is a risk that measures put in place to reduce the sector's greenhouse gas emissions will result in a shift in EU production. This would simply 'export' these emissions by shifting agricultural and forestry production to countries outside the EU with all the related impacts into the EU's agri-food sector. Furthermore, the cost of allowances under the ETS scheme will have detrimental effects for some energy-intensive facilities (e.g. dairy, tomato and pig meat processing cooperatives). Carbon leakage would also lead to increased emissions, where production in other countries is less efficient than in the EU.

14-What is needed is also Research and development of technology to fill existing gaps of the mitigation potential of management practices, their acceptance and their cost so that the most cost-effective options can be chosen at farm level. Moreover, the contribution of renewable energy provisions sourced from agriculture and forestry and made available to the energy, transport and heating sectors has to be acknowledged.

15-And the support for the implementation of innovative solutions in practice; offering solutions along the food chain, taking into account differences in farm systems across Europe, as well as the provision of advice and vocational training.

16-In addition, it is important to acknowledge that mitigation options providing multiple environmental benefits should be favoured, for example pasture-based livestock systems can simultaneously contribute to carbon sequestration, biodiversity protection, water storage, fires, floods and erosion prevention.

17-Finally, to end in a clear message in view of the Copenhagen Conference, Copa-Cogeca believes that the Copenhagen agreement could boost sustainable farming at global level, and deliver the EU's need for food security and the competitiveness of agriculture.

The pre-condition should be that farmers' efforts are supported by fair and robust policies, like the Common Agricultural Policy post 2013, in the EU and worldwide.