Friday 13th: Lucky or unlucky day for CAP reform?

Title
Environmental and farming groups call for greener and fairer farming

On July 13, the European Commission organised an important conference on the future of Europe's farming. Environmental and farming groups, including BirdLife Europe, were invited to present their positions and asked the policy makers to make this July 13 a lucky day for the Common Agricultural Policy. The conference – 'The CAP towards 2020 - taking stock with civil society' came at a crucial stage in the process of agreeing a new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). For the campaign groups, European agriculture needs to move away from harmful and industrialised farming and towards greener and fairer farming practices that lead to rural vitality. They urge policy makers to fix Europe's broken model of farming and food consumption, and its devastating environmental and social impacts, with real reform.

In order to raise the decision makers' and the media's interest on their recommendations, volunteers of the groups dressed as cows have distributed four leaves clovers at the entrance of the Conference. The message behind this gesture was to ask the EU decision makers to make this 13 July a lucky day for the CAP. Photos available here.

For the groups *'The debate on food and farming in Europe needs a change of fortune. Policy makers must push for a radical reform of the Common Agricultural Policy. Member states and parliamentarians mustn't be given the option to sidestep their responsibility towards European citizens, who want to see green and fair farming that provides healthy food for consumers and truly protects the environment."* The current direction of the CAP debate will not deliver the food and farming that European citizens wish for. The European Commission's proposals risk being watered down by the European Parliament and Council.

The new CAP should promote green and fair farming that provides healthy food for consumers, ensures long term food security, protects the environment and creates diverse and resilient rural communities. For that, the European Commission must ensure its proposals are strengthened, not weakened. The priority should be rejuvenating farming and rural communities, while providing a decent livelihood for all farmers in a healthy environment – not business as usual. **Join the Good Food March on September 19**: farmers, citizens and young people from across Europe are going to express demands for the future of Europe's food and farming directly in Brussels' streets. More details at: www.goodfoodmarch.eu For more information please contact Trees Robijns, EU Agriculture and Bioenergy Policy Officer at BirdLife Europe.