

Brussels – 21 March 2016

NGOs demand “Fitness check” of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

More than 100 NGOs active in farming, development, environment, climate, animal welfare, food systems and public health, have signed a joint letter^[1], to the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, to demand a review of the European food and farming system.

The CAP, which accounts for almost 40% of the EU Budget, is not equipped to address the fundamental challenges that Europe is facing in the agriculture sector.

It has not been able to prevent and in many cases even paved the way for an unfair system for farmers, a constant crisis on agricultural markets, a continuous decline in the state of natural resources, failures in delivering in animal welfare, serious public health effects, and severe negative impacts beyond Europe’s borders.

The European Commission needs to urgently evaluate if the CAP fulfils its objectives and conduct an ambitious “Fitness Check”; it is time for President Juncker to step up his commitment to the better regulation agenda.

Trees Robijns, Senior EU Agriculture and Bioenergy Policy Officer at BirdLife Europe ^[2], **stated:** *“We need a good, open and honest debate with all stakeholders about the CAP based on five points so often touted by the fitness check: its effectiveness, efficiency, coherence with other EU policies, relevance and the added value of an EU-wide policy against national ones. Essentially, the EU would finally have to ask itself (and answer) the question: Is the CAP fit for purpose?”*

The money spent on the CAP has to deliver policy that benefits EU citizens, farmers, our environment, our animals, our health and climate. To ensure this, we need a “Fitness check” of the CAP and we need it to start now! **ENDS**

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Notes:

[1] Letter and list of signatories available on the website tiny.cc/CAPFC

[2] BirdLife Europe is a Partnership of nature conservation organisations in 47 countries, including all EU Member States, and a leader in bird conservation. Through its unique local to global approach BirdLife Europe delivers high impact and long term conservation for the benefit of nature and people.