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Press Release

European Commission does not address food security in White Paper on Climate Change

Following today's publication of the white paper on climate change by the European Commission, Copa and Cogeca are concerned that key issues about this serious challenge have not been addressed.

Pekka Pesonen, Secretary General of Copa-Cogeca, said, "agriculture is the sector most affected by climate change. Local climate conditions are crucial for our work but beyond our control. Whilst the white paper correctly pinpoints some of the threats to EU food production – such as more crop failures, greater threats of plant and animal disease and lower water availability, it does not acknowledge the implications of climate change on food production."

The Secretary General explained, "climate change puts our food production at risk. We therefore need a strategic approach to maintaining sustainable EU food production at reasonable prices in the framework of the CAP. We need measures to ensure food security, further improve production efficiency and protect the environment at the same time. The intentions of this white paper are laudable, but a comprehensive response to climate change cannot just come within environmental policy. Simply improving the quality of life in rural areas will not necessarily increase the resilience of agriculture to climate change."

The Secretary General also criticised the fact that the white paper does not acknowledge the positive contribution of agriculture to maintaining ecosystems, for example by using the water storage capacity of biomass and agricultural soil and by recharging groundwater faster than any other type of land use. He regretted that the more balanced approach of the staff working document on agriculture accompanying the white paper, was not given a more prominent role.

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