

Brussels, - 7 SEP. 2010
PH/2010/5978

Dear Lord Roper,

The European Commission would like to thank the European Union Committee of the House of Lords for having examined the Commission's White Paper on Adapting to Climate Change (COM(2009) 147) and for having provided its opinion on it. This report provides valuable input for the formulation of the Commission's adaptation policy, and thus we welcome the opportunity to respond to your comments.

I take note that Commissioner Ciolos has also received a copy of your report and has already replied on 12 May to your letter, sent separately to him on 30 March 2012.

The Commission agrees with most of the views and recommendations voiced in the Report. We fully share the Report's opinion that the upcoming review of the CAP for the period after 2013 provides a crucial opportunity to step up efforts in addressing climate change adaptation and mitigation objectives in the agricultural sector.

As regards your recommendation in paragraph 41, this idea is in line with the Commission's intentions on this subject. We are considering a more regular assessment of the measures applied to climate change adaptation and mitigation. We would like to strengthen the reporting tools already available, and to ensure that the assessments done by Member States in this regard are more complete. We hope to introduce improved reporting mechanisms in the coming years, but at the latest from 2013 onwards.

Concerning your recommendation in paragraph 69, the Commission recognises that intensification of agriculture and sustainability needs to work hand-in-hand. Moreover, any intensification of the agriculture should be done in the most efficient way that causes the least harm to the environment and to the climate than other production methods.

With regard to your recommendation in paragraph 138, we fully share your view on this. Dissemination of knowledge among practitioners is the most efficient way to raise awareness. In the area of agriculture, the EU has the tools necessary for doing this (such as the Farm Advisory System, FAS), and now the Commission is working towards filling them up with the appropriate content.

Lord Roper
Chairman of the European Union Select Committee
House of Lords
Palace of Westminster
UK-London SW1A 0PW

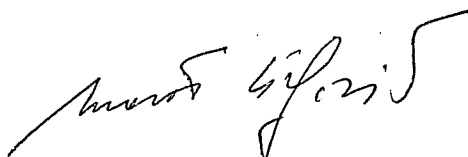
The FAS is currently mandatory, meaning that Member States must offer the service to farmers that are free to decide to make use of it. Its scope must cover at least advices on cross compliance. Some requirements of cross compliance have direct and/or indirect positive effects on mitigation and adaptation to climate change. In the framework of the post 2013 CAP, ways to strengthen this tool will be assessed. The Commission work programme foresees the adoption of a Communication on the post 2013 CAP before the end of 2010.

Training support is also already available to Member States in the menu of Rural development measures in the CAP (Council Regulation 1698/05). Some of them are already making use of that measure to train farmers on climate change challenges.

We would also like to mention the planned establishment of the European Climate Change Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation Clearinghouse by 2011. The clearinghouse shall act as a facilitator for collecting and disseminating scientific information, data and case studies about climate change impacts and vulnerability, to build a consistent and updated knowledge base. It will also assist an effective uptake of this knowledge by EU, national, regional, local or sectoral decision makers, by offering guidance, tools, best practices for assessments of vulnerability to climate change at different geographical levels and of adaptation plans and measures.

The Commission hopes you will find this a valuable contribution to your own deliberations and looks forward to developing our policy dialogue further in the future.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mario Monti". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.