



European Commission remote stakeholder event on
the sustainable use of pesticides

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Copa and Cogeca's views on the review of the SUD

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copa * **cogeca**

European farmers

European agri-cooperatives

The role of the EU agricultural sector in the framework of the Green Deal objectives

- * Green Deal and F2F tackle pesticides use and hazard.

- * Green Deal approach → several axis linked to the agricultural sector.

- * Opportunity
- * Challenges
- * Concerns

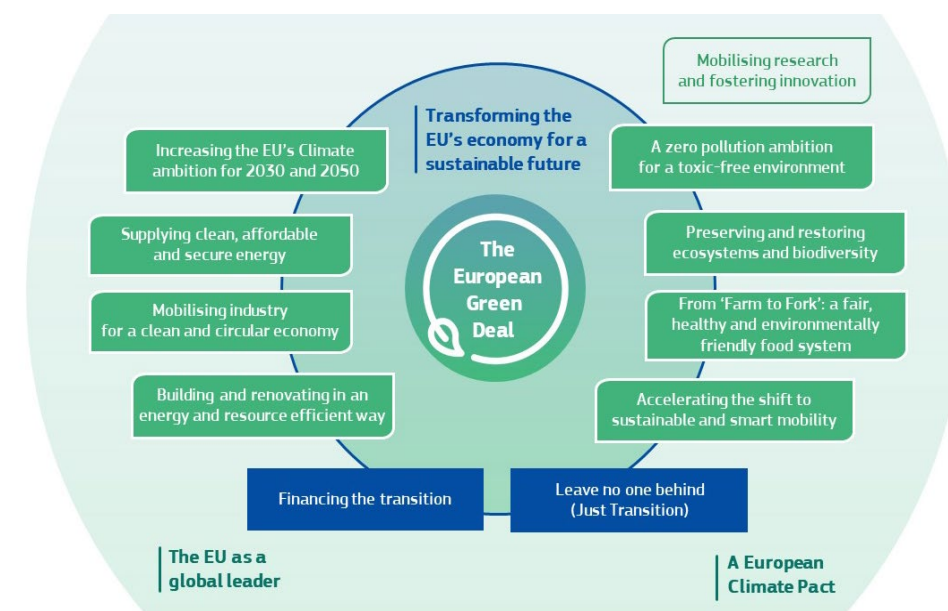
- * F2F and Biodiversity Strategies:

- * Set goals
- * No concrete ways and means to implement them.

- * Reduce the use of pesticides and fertilisers when there is no mention of a list of “credible and realistic alternatives” → this should be clarified

“Reduce the overall use and risk of chemical pesticides by 50% and the use of more hazardous pesticides by 50% by 2030”.

(F2F Strategy, May 2020)



State of play of agriculture in the EU

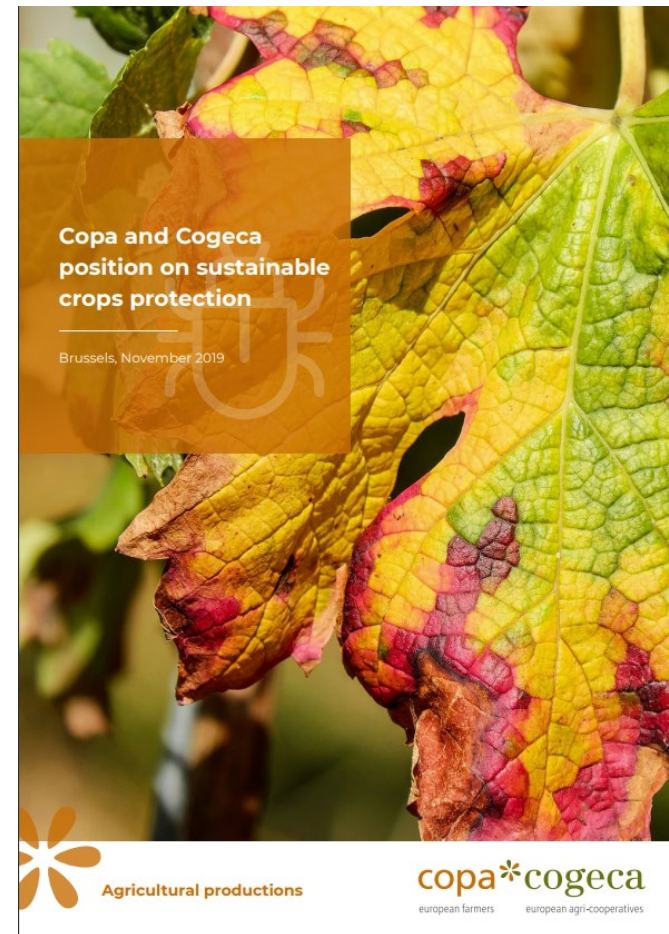
* EU agricultural sector is currently facing a number of challenges:

- * Ensuring food security under increasing demand for food, feed and non-food outlet production, and under climate change pressure.
- * Providing millions of jobs
- * Feeding the world while taking into account the 3 pillars of sustainability (environmental, social, economic).
- * Taking care of the natural resources on 48% of the EU's land
- * Producing food with fewer natural resources by the month, while:
 - * facing new pests and diseases derived from climate change effects
 - * reducing greenhouse gas emissions
 - * maintaining the same amount of productivity on the same amount of land
- * Shifting consumer demands with increased:
 - * requirements with respect to the product itself
 - * Requirements on how it is produced.



Main principles of sustainable crop protection

- * Safeguarding plants and crops' health → cornerstone of all farming activities & modern arable farming in the EU.
- * Farmers may have recourse to Plant Protection Products (PPPs) to:
 - * Grow healthy crops on competitive terms
 - * Ensure that consumer demands are met
 - * provide safe food, feed and non-food agricultural products
 - * Safeguard the environment
- * Plant protection tool in the market → huge economic difference for farmers.
- * Global trade → other countries have tools currently unavailable in the EU → unlevelled playing field (competitiveness of EU farmers).
- * Costs and time needed to register new substances increased significantly in the last few years
- * Many substances have not been authorised.



SUD and Integrated Pest Management

- * Copa and Cogeca welcomed the initiative of the European Commission to evaluate the Directive on the sustainable use of plant protection products (SUD).
- * Integrated Pest Management (IPM) allows farmers to avoid an excessive use of chemical pesticides and they are increasingly moving towards low-risk substances and selective crop protection techniques.
- * Availability and use of IPM tools → key for a sustainable agricultural production
- * IPM combines agricultural practices → reduce the impact of agriculture on the environment:
 - * Crop rotation, implementation of resistant cultivars, soil management, seed protection, biocontrol, genomic techniques, chemical substances, low-risk substances, natural substances, etc.
- * Use of chemicals = last resort in IPM.
- * Chemical PPPs → essential in IPM → support high quality agricultural production.

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Copa and Cogeca's Contribution to the Impact Assessment and Updated EU Rules for SUD (2009/128/EC)

Copa and Cogeca welcome the initiative of the European Commission to evaluate the Directive on the sustainable use of plant protection products (SUD). As both consumers and suppliers of food, we farmers are the ones who have the greatest interest in having safe production conditions that respect the environment, animal welfare and the natural environment, in order to provide products of the highest quality, with maximum health guarantees and at affordable prices, as well as contribute to the conservation of our soils, the quality of our water and the diversity of our flora and fauna. Farmers' activities are also carried out in an open and complex environment, subject to numerous foreseeable and unpredictable variables (inclement weather, high probability of being affected by pests and diseases, crop diversity, climate change) that can affect production. This must be taken into account when considering any legislative changes, specific objectives or impact studies on the state of EU agriculture and its future potential.



Need of alternatives

- * Adequate tools:
 - * Better manage natural resources
 - * Deliver goods and services to the consumers
 - * Adapt to the effects of climate change
 - * Respond to societal demands.
- * New alternatives to conventional PPPs → increase in quantity and quality of agricultural output + using fewer-more precise inputs.
- * All the alternatives that may come to the agricultural market must be affordable for farmers + adapted to the production circumstances
- * New tools → Not a cost-effective investment for now.
- * Clear, transparent and swift procedures for the evaluation of new plant protection tools → guaranteed always.
- * The interest of farmers on using these tools = high proper availability = far from envisaged.



Innovation as a crucial piece

- * Innovation = essential → enhance sustainability in a globalized market.
- * Research and development of alternatives for IPM is very important.
- * Innovation should be based on:
 - * Existing scientific literature and evidence
 - * Wealth of knowledge collected by research programmes (EU, national).
- * R&I needs to take into account the differences in crop production & climatic regions across the EU.
- * Identify farmers' specific needs in advance → bridge the gap between science and practice → Encourage exchange of information → Research results available for farmers → translation into innovative and readily applicable tools in the fields.



A solid scientific basis for plant protection tools

- * The F2F and the Green Deal proposals should be based on:
 - * Solid science -based risk analysis paradigm
 - * Precautionary principle.
- * Placing in the market of safe and effective active substances should always be science-based assessment → **key**.
- * Farmers should be equipped with the right toolbox → developed hand in hand with cutting-edge scientific progress.
- * EFSA → key role in the authorization procedure → consistent and robust evaluation.



Food for thought

- * A holistic impact assessment should be fully performed before setting any politically binding target for reduction of use of conventional PPPs
- * A safe, effective and affordable toolbox guarantees:
 - * Avoidance of a further reduction of yields and ensure food security.
 - * Maintenance of the production while tackling the increasing effects of climate change and other major crisis like COVID-19
- * Fundamental → policy formulation and implementation:
 - * Improves the functioning of the markets
 - * Contributes to a more sustainable agrifood sector (3 pillars)
 - * Recognises → already numerous production methods bring additional benefits on sustainability





Thank you for your attention !



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