

Phil HOGAN

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Dear participants of the conference "CAP 2020: Towards Sustainable Agriculture",

I have read your open letter with a great interest and I share your enthusiasm for making farming in Europe more sustainable and more responsive to a great range of challenges in the 21st century. While the discussion on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is intensifying and various ideas, interests and proposals are being voiced, I have made a clear commitment to pursue those solutions which will make the CAP modern and simple. That way, European agriculture will be able to contribute to the European Union's environmental and climate objectives and targets, as well as to the Sustainable Development Goals, in a better way than it presently does.

We should be encouraged by what the CAP has achieved already over past decades and we need to build on its success. For example, the use of fertilisers has been substantially reduced while yields have grown. Greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture have dropped by 21% between 1990 and 2014. The challenge for EU agriculture is to take these achievements further and to find solutions which combine the productive aspect with environmental preservation. In that context, I would question whether there is any one specific model of farming which is more promising than certain others with regard to sustainability.

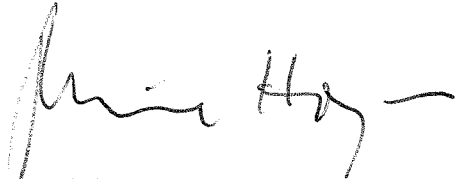
In the course of the next few months, we will be assessing different options for the future path of the CAP. I will not pre-empt any conclusions of that assessment by concluding that European agriculture must produce more with less. Precision farming, better education and training, resource efficient machinery and new models for recycling can all contribute to this objective. I agree with your conclusions that the agricultural sector

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has to become a stronger player in the circular economy. By recycling nutrients, by improving energy usage, by sharing resources: these are just some of the possibilities for a circular economy in the agricultural sector.

Let me thank you once again for your constructive input to the discussion on the modernisation and simplification of the Common Agricultural Policy.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Hogan', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Phil HOGAN