

# Newsletter CEPM

LES DERNIÈRES NOUVELLES DE LA PRODUCTION EUROPÉENNE DE MAÏS • THE LATEST NEWS IN EUROPEAN MAIZE PRODUCTION



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**Event at the European Parliament: "How to bring the concept of "carbon farming" to life" (p.2)**

## > Editorial: Taxonomy and agriculture, the latest bureaucratic madness

This issue, which has its origins in the Paris Climate Agreement, had gone under the radar because it gave the impression of a theoretical exercise with no real link to the concrete. The general idea of the Taxonomy is to reserve investments and therefore financing for products in line with the objective of carbon neutrality in 2050.

A laudable objective, but one that was prepared by a team of bureaucrats and is not based on any impact study, just as the Green Deal itself is devoid of any. In the annexes to the draft delegated act of the Commission, one notes throughout the 700 pages (!) a flagrant lack of scientific rigor and a failure to take into account technical progress, as if carbon neutrality were to be achieved "all other things being equal".

Agriculture was absent from the preparatory work and also absent from the Group of Experts convened by the Commission and it is with astonishment that we discover a kind of supervision of agriculture, forestry, bio-fuels and primary processing industries by a whole series of a priori non-binding measures that will in reality frame our production activities. Agriculture is thus threatened by a layer of complexity and constraints that go beyond the recently negotiated CAP provisions, the ink on which is barely dry. This also applies to bio-fuels, whose environmental profile does not seem to correspond to the decline trajectory desired by the Green Deal.

The draft delegated act has just been the subject of a public consultation to which we have responded. Will the Commission take it into account? Or will it adopt its delegated act? If so, we will have to mobilize to convince the Council of Ministers or the European Parliament to veto such a proposal.

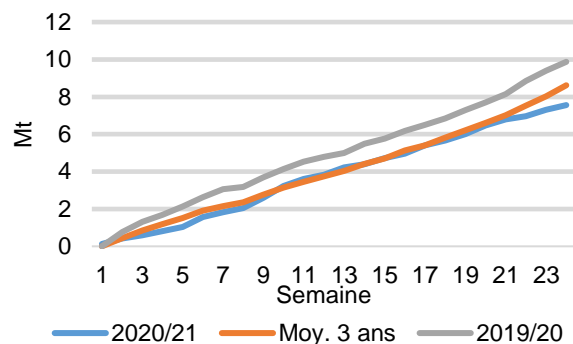
**Céline Duroc**  
**CEPM Permanent Delegate,**  
**AGPM Director General**

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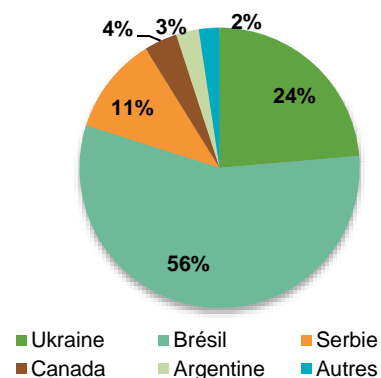
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### KEY FIGURES:

**Cumulative European imports of corn from 01/07 to 14/12**



**Origin of European corn imports from 01/07 to 14/12 14/12**



## AGRICULTURE AND PROGRESS" EVENT

### HOW TO GIVE LIFE TO THE CONCEPT OF "CARBON FARMING"?

Discussions around "carbon farming" as they develop, help to clarify the concept. But, in concrete terms, how can we concretely implement it? On November 13, 2020, the Agriculture & Progress platform organized a webinar on the topic "Carbon Farming - How to bring this innovative concept to life" under the patronage of MEP Irène Tolleret. Speakers included Nicola Di Virgilio from the European Commission's DG Agriculture, Dr. Rolf Sommer, Director of WWF Germany, and Edouard Lanckriet from Agrosolutions.

With new climate targets for 2030 and a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% compared to 1990, the EU is focusing its attention on the agricultural sector. As the Green Deal progresses, it is important to remember that although the agricultural sector is responsible for 10% of greenhouse gas emissions, we should not underestimate its crucial role in capturing carbon on agricultural land.

"Farmers are the solution to fight climate change, not the problem," said MEP Irene Tolleret at the November 13 webinar. Carbon farming can be a tool for farmers to participate in a greener world, even if it is not a miracle cure. For this, however, it is necessary for the EU to provide strong support to farmers and encourage carbon farming.

Dr. Rolf Sommer, during the same webinar, warned his audience: "as an isolated measure, carbon farming is not enough". We must also have ambitious reduction targets in all sectors. From this perspective, carbon farming has several advantages (increasing carbon sequestration in the land, promoting soil fertility, protecting our already carbon-rich soils, etc.) and it is farmers who can actually sequester carbon.

However, there is a need for the EU to provide significant support to farmers and encourage Carbon Farming.

As Edouard Lanckriet points out, carbon storage in agricultural soils is one of the few environmental measures compatible with most of the current challenges facing farmers. We need better incentives for farmers, and we need to create a better business model for them. We need carbon calculators in the hands of farmers, who are the ones who know their farms, their soils and their ecosystems best, which implies a certain flexibility and freedom to implement the project.

Nicola Di Virgilio stressed during the webinar that "political issues must be addressed" and that the local context must be taken into account. It is necessary to define baselines, monitoring, reporting and transparency. We also need a strong certification rule and a baseline to avoid losing carbon. Since not all soils are the same, we may need a fairly heterogeneous mosaic. Carbon farming is only one of the concepts that can bring strength to a green EU, but for it to become a reality, concrete and far-reaching policy measures are needed.

The success of this webinar, with 150 registrants, shows the strong interest in the European agricultural sphere around this topic. You can find more information on the platform's website [www.agriprogress.info](http://www.agriprogress.info)

### CAP : TRILOGUES HAVE STARTED

In mid-October 2020, the plenary of the Parliament (following the COMAGRI / COMENVI disagreements) adopted its position on the CAP, including a compromise on the National Strategic Plans. At the same time, the Council under the German Presidency finalized its position on the dossier within the same timeframe, allowing the trilogues to begin. Several meetings have taken place since November 10 and are continuing in December.

At the same time, calls for the complete abolition of the CAP have begun to be heard from NGOs, including a campaign led by Greenpeace. Other NGOs are more measured, for example an open letter from a group of NGOs (Birdlife, Beelife, WWF, ClientEarth...) on November 30, calling for more transparency and ambition in the current negotiations. These demands reflect the opposition in the Parliament of some S&D, Green and GUE Members of Parliament on the National Strategic Plans and the ambition of the EU, considered insufficient and

inadequate to achieve the EU's climate objectives by 2030. These calls from NGOs were echoed up to the highest levels of the Commission with Vice-President Timmermans declaring on November 13 on Dutch television that the Commission would not hesitate to withdraw its proposal if the trilogue negotiations led to an outcome not aligned with the Green Deal objectives. However, President von der Leyen intervened at this stage to confirm that this option was not currently on the table.

## AGRICULTURE & PROGRESS PLATFORM :

### ASSESSMENT OF ACTIVITIES AT THE HEART OF THE EUROPEAN DEBATE

Following the creation in January 2019 of the Agriculture & Progress platform, of which CEPM is a founding member, activities continued in full swing in 2020 in order to continue to encourage and nurture federation efforts at the European level and to share the needs of the sector following a pedagogical approach.

It is in this context that the platform has positioned itself during the year 2020 on several key topics for the sector in the context of monitoring European policy renewal and has undertaken activities at several levels in this regard:

- **Documentation, positions, meetings :**
  - Contributions on the key topics of European agricultural news
  - Contribution to the roadmap on the "Farm to Fork" strategy ;
  - Contribution to the EU biodiversity strategy for 2030
  - Position on seed imports from Ukraine following the proposal of the European Commission on equivalence measures allowing seeds produced in Ukraine to be sold on the European market at a dumped price without being subject to the same phytosanitary rules as European producers ;
  - Contribution to the Commission's report on the evaluation of the regulations on plant protection products and maximum residue limits ;
  - Platform's perspective on the RISE Foundation's report "Crop protection and the European food system: where are they going?"
  - Position on the EU taxonomy for sustainable activities and the draft delegated act ;
  
- **A series of meetings with Members of the European Parliament, Commission officials and Permanent Representations of Member States.**
  
- **Events :**
  - Last January, the Platform also organized the first conference of the cycle of events with educational scope in the European Parliament on the theme "Integrated Pest Management and Plant Protection - Matching ambition, realism and innovation with the objectives of the European strategy "from farm to fork" under the patronage of MEP Anne Sander (FR, EPP). CEPM had the opportunity to recall the key messages for the maize sector around crop protection and the need for access to innovation.
  - In July, the platform organized a second webinar on plant protection, innovative crops and production to highlight the practical challenges that legislators need to take into account when making decisions related to agriculture. As a founding member, CEPM participated in this event to demonstrate the support and efforts that maize growers are putting in place to create more sustainability in the agri-food sector, providing safe and high quality food.
  - With the support of MEP Irene Tolleret (FR, Renew), the Platform organized a final webinar on soil carbon storage last November with speakers including Nicola Di Virgilio from the European Commission's DG Agriculture, Dr. Rolf Sommer, Director of WWF Germany, and Edouard Lanckriet from Agrosolutions.
  
- In the continuity of these actions, CEPM will thus continue to position itself through the platform in 2021 on these key topics but also on the topics under development to continue to promote innovation for the future of European agriculture taking into account the needs and possibilities of a committed sector.

## EU CLIMATE POLICY FOR 2030 AND REVISION OF RED II

On July 16, 2019, Ursula von der Leyen - who was still a candidate for the presidency of the European Commission - shared with the MEPs who subsequently elected her her ambition to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. This commitment became a reality through the Green Deal in December 2019. As a milestone, interim climate targets were set for 2030 with a target of a 55% reduction in greenhouse gases by that date, compared to their 1990 level. For the European Parliament, this target must even be increased to 60%.

However, in order to be achieved, this objective for 2030 requires a series of revisions of the main legislative instruments of the energy and environmental sector. Among the texts to be revised in the "June 2021 Package" are the following two texts, which have a strong impact on the agricultural sector: the regulation on land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF), and the directive on renewable energy (RED II). Although both were recently revised in 2018, both texts will be reviewed to set out how the Commission will achieve its ambitions for 2030.

Regarding the revision of the RED II Directive, the Commission is considering the following options, among others:

- Increase EU targets for 2030 (share of renewables in the energy mix, increase targets for incorporation in fuels)
- Amend RED II to incorporate elements related to other pillars of the Green Deal: increasing the penetration of renewable and low-carbon fuels in transport (including aviation and maritime), and ensuring that renewable energy is produced in a sustainable manner by amending the sustainability and greenhouse gas emission reduction criteria for bioenergy (Articles 29-31).

CEPM is mobilized on this issue, in partnership with the European Biofuels Platform. CEPM defends the place of corn bioethanol in the face of the risk that first-generation biofuels will be marginalized and that a never-ending race for sustainability, with a rather diminishing focus, will come to a halt. CEPM encourages farm organizations to [participate](#) in the public consultation on the RED II review, which is open until February 9, 2021.



### Meeting of CEPM and member organisations 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2021

- ✓ **CEPM:**
  - **23 Feb 2021 AM:** Board Meeting
- ✓ **France:**
  - **12-13 Jan 2021:** ATS meeting, technical actions FNPSMS seeds, Montauban
- ✓ **Germany:**
  - **5 March 2021:** Board Meeting DMK

### CEPM Members

GERMANY - *Deutsches Maiskomitee (DMK)*  
BULGARIA - *National Grain Producers Association (NGPA)  
et Conseil des Organisations Agricoles*  
SPAIN - *Asociacion General de Productores de Maíz de España (AGPME)*  
FRANCE - *Association Générale des Producteurs de Maïs (AGPM)*  
HUNGARY - *Vetőmag Szövetség Szakmaközi Szervezet és Terméktanács (VSZT)*  
ITALY - *Associazione Italiana Maiscoltori (AMI)*  
POLAND - *Polski Związek Producentów Kukurydzy (PZPK)*  
PORTUGAL - *ANPROMIS*  
ROMANIA - *Association Roumaine des Producteurs de Maïs (APPR)*  
SLOVAKIA - *Zväz pestovateľov a spracovateľov kukurice (ZPSK)*

### Civil Dialogue Group 1<sup>st</sup> half 2021

**12-02-2021** : Direct payments and greening  
**05-03-2021** : Arable Crops - COP & seeds  
**19-04-2021** : Arable crops - Sugar  
**07-05-2021** : International aspects of agriculture  
**21-05-2021** : Arable crops - Dried fodder and Energy crops  
**11-06-2021** : Environment and climate change  
**02-07-2021** : Arable crops - Rice