



## **Comments from CIA — Italian farmers**

### **consultation on proposals for revision of the various sets of rules in the field of State aid in the agricultural, forestry and forestry sectors fishing**

With this document, Cia Agricoltori Italiani proposes its contribution to the consultation on proposals to revise the various sets of State aid rules relating to the agricultural, forestry and fisheries sectors.

CIA Agricoltori Italiane welcomes the possibility of contributing to the two draft communications proposed by the European Commission. These proposals aim to ensure that State aid rules for the agricultural, forestry and fisheries sectors are fit for the green transition and make it easier and faster for Member States to provide funding, without unduly distorting competition in the Single Market. In addition, these proposals are intended to simplify the procedure for the recognition of such aid from an administrative point of view.

In view of the growing economic difficulties caused by the pandemic crisis, coupled with the serious repercussions of the terrible global geopolitical situation, Cia Agricoltori Italiane considers it essential to revise these instruments to support European farmers.

#### **Simplification and support for agricultural businesses**

1. In the light of the recent cyclical situation, the extension of the State aid Temporary Framework (which is due to expire on 30 June 2022) is of paramount importance in order to counter the effects of the current crisis. In this context, consideration should also be given to the possibility of having recourse to an automatic mechanism for using the *temporary framework* in the event of a crisis situation.
2. It is desirable to establish a special scheme for the implementation of the *de minimis* Regulation in agriculture, given the significant differences between the agricultural sector and the other sectors. In particular, we ask for the aid ceiling to be increased to EUR 50,000 for a period of three years and for a minimum amount below which the *de minimis* Regulation does not apply (EUR 5,000).
3. In order to verify that public aid is granted in compliance with the provisions of Community legislation, provision should be made for each Member State to publish a public electronic database; in the event that Member States fail to comply with this obligation, the penalties resulting from any checks should be the responsibility of the same Member State;
4. In order to avoid problems in monitoring the arrangements for granting State aid, it is desirable to lay down, for each type of aid granted, detailed access requirements, the measures to which the aid is granted and the constraints of cumulation with other aid granted by the Member States or

local authorities, specifying on a case-by-case basis which Community regulation should be used to ensure that cumulation does not exceed the maximum intensities laid down.

**5.** With regard to projects promoted by farms linked to the supply of renewable sources (solar, wind, water and agriculture), we consider it necessary to provide for a simplified mechanism allowing Member States not to notify the European Commission of aid schemes.

**6.** We welcome the introduction of the possibility of defining specific aid for *carbon farming*. However, financial incentives such as state aid should cover not only CO<sub>2</sub> sequestration in land use and forestry, but also climate change mitigation in agricultural practices and climate change adaptation measures.

**7.** In addition to the damage caused by protected animals, compensation must also be provided for other animal species, leaving it to the national, regional and local authorities to define them, as the impact varies from country to country. It is also considered necessary to provide that aid intended to compensate for damage caused by protected animals is exempt from notification; it should be possible to compensate 100 % of the damage caused by animals, including loss of income, as already foreseen for damage resulting in a loss of means of production;

**8.** It remains crucial to provide for the establishment of aid for the prevention, control and eradication of zoonoses which can be transmitted directly or indirectly between animals and humans and to compensate for any damage caused. It is considered necessary to add a provision on biosecurity investments required by health authorities to prevent the spread of animal diseases or pests.

**9.** It is considered useful to provide for the introduction of direct aid to undertakings carrying out measures aimed at restoring and upgrading the area from a landscape and environmental point of view, in order to preserve and restore the natural and semi-natural environments present; a simplified mechanism, whereby Member States should not notify the European Commission of aid schemes, would also be desirable for the recognition of these measures.

**10.** As a result of the increase in the percentages of aid granted to each beneficiary, in order to prevent some of the beneficiaries from being unable to access that aid because the funds allocated for that purpose are insufficient, it is necessary to provide for an increase in the annual budget of the former funds earmarked for State aid to an amount greater than that already fixed, amounting to EUR 150 million.