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European Organisation of Agricultural, Rural and Forestry Contractors

Confédération Européenne des Entrepreneurs de Travaux Techniques Agricoles, Ruraux et Forestiers

Europäischer Zentralverband der land- und forstwirtschaftlichen Lohnunternehmer und ländlichen Dienstleistungsunternehmen

CAP REFORM – CEETAR PLEADS FOR A DEFINITION OF LAND-BASED CONTRACTORS

Why do CEETAR Members care for the CAP reform?

The concept of land-based contractors is frequently used as a synonym for "agricultural service providers". The latter carry out a wide range of work, in particular for agricultural, rural or forestry companies or public authorities, such as harvesting, soil manuring, plant protection treatment and cultivation or forestry work, very often requiring the use of heavy and modern machinery. One main structural change in agriculture is the growth in productivity, fuelled by technological progress and associated with greater economic efficiency. **Land-based contractors help agriculture and forestry sectors to cope with new challenges on biodiversity, soil quality and adaptation to climate change.**

Increasingly specialised activities and demands for higher productivity require the involvement of companies, which are themselves able to provide high-technology equipment and specialised expertise to their clients.

CAP benefits farmer, which are themselves using contractors. A new CAP should **support the use of innovative technologies, as performed by land-based contractors** instead of encouraging farmers to purchase often very expensive new technologies themselves, in particular in the framework off pillar II. As contractors, we contribute to the reduction of debt for farms, which are not required to acquire particularly expensive machinery.

What is CEETAR asking for?

The CAP can no longer limit itself to defining agriculture as being the exclusive domain of the farmer. The profound changes in European agriculture during the recent decades were supported by the emergence of new production methods developed by agricultural contractors. Hence, we believe that the policy priorities and measures have to integrate us in the value chain of agriculture and forestry.

Against this background, CEETAR would like the new regulation to mention a **definition of land-based contractors**, which would cover agricultural, rural and forestry contractors, **which highlights the economic, technological and environmental added value brought by land-based contractors.**

As an example:

- Contractors use a larger amount of technology advanced machinery: as mentioned previously, they support the use innovative technologies for agricultural, rural and forestry activities and not the direct purchase of technology by farmers,
- Contractors contributes to a better use of resources by saving costs, more profitability for farming activities and more environmental protection, including for small size exploitations,
- Contractors also employ more skilled workers than farmers do, our employees being specially trained for driving and using the newest technology.

Concisely, a definition of land-based contractors mentioned on the CAP regulation will allow land-based contractors to enhance their visibility as a key player of the new CAP.

What else is important for CEETTAR?

- CEETTAR does not only represent agricultural contractors but also rural and forestry contractors. Beyond contractors, CEETTAR is pleading for **a more integrated terminology** in the new CAP, by using definitions which encompasses all types of agricultural, rural and forestry activities;
- Given the diversity of contractor's customers, CEETTAR is in favour of a **broad definition of CAP beneficiaries**, which would take into consideration all types of farmers, which may be requesting contractors' services. In addition to this, direct payment calculation shall not discriminate between the **use of employees and services from external contractors**;
- CEETTAR deplors the fact that the **forestry sector** is not sufficiently mentioned in the proposed regulation, in particular in the extension of the granting of payments for natural or other area-specific constraints (article 66), access to Installation of young farmers (article 69) and the possibility for the forestry sector to benefit from risk management tools (article 70).

About CEETTAR:

The European Confederation of Agricultural, Rural and Forestry Contractors, established in 1961, represents about 150,000 companies and nearly 600,000 workers. It aims to represent the interests of land-based contractors in Europe. In 2014, the European Network of Forestry Entrepreneurs decided to merge with CEETTAR, resulting in a stronger and more representative single organisation representing land-based contractors at EU level.

CEETTAR aims to be a proactive force to benefit the contractors and the rural economy at European level. Its objective is to:

- Represent the national federations and defend their professional interests in relation to the institutions of the EU. This way, CEETTAR is recognised as representative organisation for contractors towards the European Institutions,
- Represent the national federations and defend their professional interests towards other private organisations, which are active at European level and beyond. CEETTAR maintains constructive relations with COPA-CEGOCA (farmers), CEMA (agricultural machinery industry), EFFAT (workers)...
- Help organisations in the new Member States to fulfil their national objectives as rapidly as possible and under the best conditions through the expertise transfer developed by the CAP 50 years ago.