Presentation of the work programme of the Swedish Presidency

2009/2596(RSP) - 13/07/2009

The Swedish Agriculture Minister, Mr Eskil Erlandsson, gave the Council an **overview of the work programme** and the issues to be debated during Swedish Presidency in the field of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The work of the Swedish Presidency of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council will concentrate on the following priorities:

Sustainable Fisheries - the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP): the Presidency's overall vision for fisheries policy is to create conditions for a sustainable use of resources. The fisheries ministers will continue the discussion on the future fisheries policy, based on the Green Paper presented by the Commission. The Presidency aims to conclude negotiations on a proposal on fisheries control in the autumn. Sweden will chair the annual negotiations on the TAC and Quotas Regulation in December and intends to build on the success of the French Presidency and reach an agreement to keep to the recovery and management plans already that have already been adopted.

Food and Climate - the global challenges: the agricultural sector is a key actor in the measures that climate change calls for. Agriculture must contribute to reduce climate impact while adapting to changes in the climate. This is necessary in order to deal with future climate change and enable environmental and resource efficiency. The production of sustainable energy and energy efficiency measures are crucial in this context. Climate change may also affect the conditions for agricultural production in that, for example, new plant and animal diseases may emerge and water conditions may change. These are important issues to be addressed.

In July the Commission will present its working document "Adapting to climate change: the challenge for European agriculture and rural areas" (see SEC(2009)0417). Furthermore, agriculture and climate change will be the topic for the discussion at the Informal Meeting of Agriculture and Fisheries Ministers.

The Presidency will also host a conference in November on "Climate Smart Food", which will focus on climate change impacts on the whole food chain – from production to consumption.

Securing global food security for future generations is a challenge, particularly in view of the fact that the world's population is expected to double by 2050. The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) will play an important role in achieving the food security objective. Its highest decision-making body, the Conference, will convene a meeting in November 2009. As holder of the Presidency, Sweden will speak on behalf of the EU at the meeting and thereby advance the work of the FAO.

Sound animal husbandry and healthy animals: the aim of the Swedish Presidency is to advance work on animal welfare issues and to keep the debate alive on the importance of good animal welfare in the EU. Several animal welfare issues will be on the agenda during the autumn of 2009, including a conference on Animal Welfare. More and more EU citizens are becoming interested in the issue of how we treat our animals. Sweden has a strong profile in animal welfare issues, both within the EU and internationally. The EU strategy for animal health – 'Prevention is Better than Cure' – is important for future animal husbandry in the EU. During the Presidency the Government will be active in ensuring that the Council participates constructively in these discussions.

Moreover, a number of events relating to Agriculture and Fisheries will also be organised in Sweden.

Other issues to be dealt with by the Presidency include:

- **Food and food safety**: work will continue on the proposal for a regulation on the provision of information to consumers. The aim is to reach a general approach in the Council. As regards the proposal for a regulation on novel foods, the Presidency intends to prepare for a second reading agreement with the European Parliament. The Presidency also aims to reach Council conclusions on the report on the implementation of the **food hygiene** legislation.
- **Future Common Agricultural Policy: Rural development**: the Swedish Presidency aims to hold a policy debate in the Council in October on the future CAP, focusing on rural development.
- **Simplification of the Common Agricultural Policy**: the Presidency is therefore planning a presentation by the Commission on simplification, based on the 39 proposals referred to in the conclusions of the Agricultural Council in May. The Presidency is also planning a workshop in Brussels in September to promote a broad and informal exchange of views on how to further **simplify the CAP**.
- **Illegal logging**: work will continue to work on the proposal to combat illegal logging of timber aiming for a regulation that will be an effective and proportional tool. The objective is to reach a political agreement in the Council in December.
- **Situation on the milk market**: it is a recognised fact that the world market price for milk has declined faster than anyone could have expected only a year ago. The European Council therefore discussed the current situation on the dairy market during its meeting in June and invited the Commission to present an in-depth market analysis within the next two months, including possible options for stabilising the dairy market, while respecting the outcome of the Health Check. The Commission is expected to present its market analysis/report at the end of July. The Commission will present its proposal to extend the intervention period for milk products at the Council meeting in July. The Presidency will press for a decision to be made on the intervention period as soon as possible.