Greenhouse gas emissions and removals resulting from activities related to land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF): accounting rules and information on actions

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The Council had an **orientation debate** on the proposal for a decision on accounting rules and action plans on greenhouse gas emissions and removals resulting from activities related to land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF).

The Commission proposes that member states should establish, for each accounting period, national action plans on measures to limit or reduce emissions and to maintain or increase removals from the LULUCF sector. The national action plans are aimed at stimulating the mitigation potential of the sector, increasing the visibility of measures taken and promoting best practice.

Ministers discussed **two main issues**: the proposed phased approach and its implications and the role and implementation of the proposed national action plans. Member states generally welcomed the Commission's proposal and its phased approach.

Concerning the timing and conditions for the second step (i.e. the formal inclusion of the sector in the EU’s greenhouse emission reduction commitment) there were different views around the table. For some delegations, this step should be taken as soon as possible, whereas for others it is linked to new or revised emission reduction commitments. The Presidency concluded that this complex issue needs to be explored both in more depth and taking account of the wider context of the EU climate policy. Overall, it was considered very important to ensure consistency of the proposal with decisions taken

in the context of the UNFCCC.

As regards the national action plans, ministers generally agreed on the importance to stimulating the mitigation potential of the LULUCF sector and of increasing the visibility of the mitigation efforts by farmers, forest owners and all other actors concerned. Furthermore, many delegations pointed out that the sector should not be considered in isolation but in an integrated way and by making use of synergies with existing policies at EU and national level.

Several ministers stressed the need to avoid creating any unnecessary administrative burden or duplication of work and to take due account of national circumstances and competencies at each level.

Many delegations were of the view that member states themselves are best placed to decide on the appropriate measures. The guiding principles resulting from this debate will be taken into account with a view to further discussions and progress on this file.