Multifunctionality and reform of the common agricultural policy CAP

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report by María RODRÍGUEZ RAMOS (PES, E) on "multifuctionality" and CAP reform. The report regretted that CAP reform measures were not related to the CAP as a whole, but were instead too focused on the field of rural development. It also rejected the budget cuts introduced on a regressive basis whose main purpose was to finance future sectoral reforms, the cost, objectives, nature and practicalities of which were not yet known. The committee also considered that markets policy and rural-development policy should be made complementary by means of measures designed to redirect production towards sustainable, high-quality development. It stressed that most second-pillar measures (food-safety policy, quality policy, environmentally sound agricultural practices, young farmers, etc.) should be incorporated into the markets policy, so that a common agricultural and rural policy could be devised. MEPs also called on Parliament to commission a study setting out the technical aspects of CAP reform, in particular, the run-up to the 2006 financial debate. The Commission was urged to commit itself to the firm defence of all aspects of a multifunctional agriculture based on the European agricultural model. The aim, according to the committee, should be to avoid distortions of competition in the negotiations in the WTO relating to the agricultural chapter. Finally, the committee proposed that the codecision procedure should be applied to all legislative acts in the field of agriculture, with a view to improving the EU's democratic legitimacy and its decision-making procedure.