Agriculture and fishing

98. **The main objective of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)** is to maintain local production capacity and increase farmers' competitiveness. It must also contribute to achieving climate and environmental objectives, soil health, clean water and air, and biodiversity. CAP needs to be more supportive of business start-ups in the sector, and advisory services and support systems need to be put in place for new and young entrepreneurs.

99. We consider it essential to **simplify the Common Agricultural Policy** to reduce the administrative burden for both farmers and the state. In particular, it is important to simplify the performance framework of the CAP and to change the system of uniform and additional requirements, controls, and sanctions (conditionality system) in a way that better motivates producers to comply.

100. Opportunities must be created to quickly adjust the CAP **support requirements to changes in market conditions or climatic conditions**, as long as the changes do not jeopardise achieving the sustainable agriculture objectives. In the event of a military crisis, a Member State must have the right to derogate from the basic CAP regulations in a way that ensures food security on its territory.

101. A situation must not occur in the EU, where the lack of **suitable plant protection products** jeopardises the competitiveness of farmers and food security. The evaluation of active substances must also consider the existence of effective alternatives. The evaluation and authorisation of scientifically proven low-risk plant protection products must be simplified and expedited.

102. The principles for regulating **new genomic techniques** need to be renewed, and the legislation updated, considering modern science-based arguments. The introduction of new genomic techniques will help to ensure a more effective and sustainable food system.

103. **To promote animal health and welfare**, we consider it important to ban the cage rearing of **laying hens**. In the case of **long-distance transport of animals**, it is important that the requirements to be introduced are evidence-based, consider the geographical specificities of the Member States, and do not create barriers to the single market.

104. A coherent and clear **food labelling system** must be created that presents nutritional information on the front of the package and supports healthy and sustainable choices for consumers. We attach importance to the development and implementation of recommendations to reduce excess sugar, salt, and fat in foods.

105. The **regulation of food contact materials** needs to be modernised to ensure the protection of public health, the free movement of goods within the internal market, and the safety of recycled materials that come into contact with food.

106. To ensure sustainable fish stocks, **multi-annual plans for managing fish stocks** need to be renewed while maintaining a science-based quota system. Agreements between the Baltic Sea countries (BALTFISH) must be taken into account.

107. On the EU level, coherent measures need to be devised to **mitigate the impact of cormorants and grey seals** on fish stocks. We are open to discussing an update of the EU Birds Directive's list of huntable species to give member states more scope to manage cormorant populations where they have a high impact on fish stocks. We are also open to discussing amendments to the EU regulation that restricts seal trade to find ways to allow for small-scale and sustainable seal hunting and related trade.

108. Under the EU's Common Fisheries Policy, **fleet management rules need to be reviewed and limits on vessel capacity removed** where sustainability is already ensured, for example, through volume of authorised catches or the number of passive gears in small-scale coastal fisheries.

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