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Subject: Report of the meeting between Commissioner Kyriakides and the Green 10 - 10 February 2020 (BASIS CAB/70)

Meeting between Commissioner Kyriakides and the Green 10 environmental NGOs

Date: 10 February 2020

Participants:

Cabinet: Commissioner Kyriakides, Annukka Ojala (Deputy Head of CAB), Roberto Reig Rodrigo (Member of CAB)

DG SANTE: Sabine Jülicher (director E), [REDACTED] (01)

Green 10: [REDACTED] (Greenpeace), [REDACTED] (WWF), [REDACTED] (BirdLife), [REDACTED] (Health and Environment Alliance), [REDACTED] (Friends of the Earth), [REDACTED] (Health and Environment Alliance), [REDACTED] (European Environmental Bureau), [REDACTED] (Transport and Environment)

Report:

The meeting, requested by the Green 10, took place in the context of stakeholder consultations on the Farm to Fork (F2F) Strategy.

Both sides agreed that the political agenda of this Commission opened a crucial window of opportunity to tackle climate change, promote health and protect the environment. The importance of dealing with public health in a horizontal way across the various Commission policies and strategies was further agreed, and the direct link between health and environmental policies was underlined. The Commissioner informed of the simultaneous publication of the F2F and the Biodiversity Strategy end of March. She stressed the importance of dialogue with civil society and invited the Green 10 to provide input to the public consultation on the F2F Roadmap, which was expected to be published the following week. The Commissioner also informed of a meeting with stakeholders planned for 18 February to discuss the F2F Strategy.

The Green 10 welcomed the Commission's actions and expressed in particular appreciation that the environmental angle was prominently mentioned in the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan. They promised to send comments to the public consultations launched the previous week on the Cancer Plan.

The Green 10 welcomed the Commission's plan to set a target for **pesticide** risk and use reduction in the F2F Strategy. Three particular areas were mentioned where they see need for action: 1) Setting mandatory targets for quantitative reduction. Their favoured target for pesticide use reduction is 50% by 2025 and 80% by 2030. 2) Defining criteria to decide on what should be considered as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in order to achieve proper

implementation of IPM principles. As an example, they mentioned that crop rotation should be considered IPM, while seed treatment with chemicals should not. 3) Ensuring the availability of better data on pesticides as, in their view, there is currently no available data on the use of pesticides nor on residues in the environment.

The Commissioner confirmed that a target would be set on pesticide risk and use reduction in the F2F Strategy. She informed that the second progress report on the Sustainable Use Directive (SUD) was going to be published together with the strategy and that opportunity would be provided for stakeholders to provide input. She mentioned that there was a potential to further improve the system as not all Member States implement fully the SUD. The Commissioner also recalled the ongoing work on facilitating market access of biological and low-risk plant protection products. To her question on which are in the view of the Green 10 the potential barriers that hamper the implementation of IPM principles, the Green 10 restated the need to define SUD general principles, to cut out some uses from IPM and to ensure political clarity. The representative of BirdLife International accused the Commission of zero enforcement of the SUD. He also referred to the strong links with the Common Agricultural Policy.

On **new genomic techniques**, the Green 10 asked the Commission not to water down existing rules and called for labelling and traceability provisions for new generation products as provided in the GMO legislation.

The Commissioner referred to the Green Deal Communication, which clearly mentions that the EU needs to develop innovative ways to protect harvests from pests. She informed of the ongoing work on a study on new genomic techniques, and invited the Green 10 to provide input to the public consultation. She emphasised that any future action by the Commission would be based on scientific evidence and that standards on safety would not be lowered. The importance of looking at the added value / societal benefit of new genomic techniques/products was also mentioned. The Commission's work on the revision of the General Food Law was highlighted in relation to independent risk assessment.

The Green 10 reminded that intensified agriculture is the main cause of **biodiversity** loss and a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emission. They encouraged the Commission to take serious actions to reduce **consumption**. The Green 10's favoured reduction target by 2030 is 50 % for meat/dairy consumption and 40 % for fish consumption. In their view, a lot can be achieved by various actions such as guidance, labelling, taxation etc.

On **food waste**, the Green 10 sees the F2F Strategy as a great opportunity to set EU-wide binding targets in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. Their proposed reduction target is 50 % by 2030. The Commissioner confirmed that food waste would be part of the F2F Strategy. The Commission's work to establish harmonised measurement was also highlighted.

According to the Green 10, every farm should have 10 % **green infrastructure** as this would also contribute to IPM. In their view, when dealing with sustainable production and consumption, the Commission's health and environment portfolios should work closely together. Links to the

Common Agricultural Policy were also pointed out. The Commissioner confirmed her close working relationship with ENV and GROW Cabinets.

On **food contact materials** (FCM), the Green 10 welcomed that this area would be part of the F2F Strategy. In particular, they asked the Commission to ban substances for FCM use if they were already restricted by the framework regulation on chemicals (REACH). The Green 10 asked the Commission to reopen the FCM legislation and enlarge its scope to all 17 materials. The Commission informed about the on-going evaluation of the EU legislation and the public consultation to be launched during the second half of 2020.

The Green 10 wants to see the EU as a driving force on **zero-pollution**. In relation to **air quality**, they highlighted the importance of including this topic in strategies other than the Industrial Policy. In particular, they asked the Commission to ensure better monitoring and to set a requirement for local air quality plans. Particulate matter is of specific concern to the Green 10. They mentioned that the Sustainable Mobility Strategy (related to transport) should also include a health angle. The Commissioner agreed to look into this.

Finally, the Commissioner reassured of her commitment to move forward in a transparent way, considering any actions after careful assessment and on the basis of science. She recalled that the publication of the F2F Strategy would only be the start of a long process and asked for the support of the Green 10 members along the way.

Written by [REDACTED]