The April Agriculture and Fisheries Council will start at **10.00** and be chaired by Petre Daea, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Romania.

After the approval of A items, the Council will exchange views on the post 2020 **Common Agricultural Policy reform package**. The discussion will be held in **public session** and focus on a Presidency paper on the **new delivery model** set out in the Commission proposal for a CAP strategic plan regulation.

After lunch ministers will be informed about a couple of Any other business items related to the **European Maritime and Fisheries Fund** (**public session**) and the follow up to the ruling of the European Court of Justice on **organisms obtained by mutagenesis** (case C-528/16).

Later on the Council will have an exchange of views on the **agricultural aspects of the Commission’s communication ‘Clean planet for all: strategic long-term vision for a climate neutral economy’ in public session.**

Ministers will then be informed about and exchange views on **trade-related agricultural issues**.

The Council meeting will end with an information point on the declaration "**A smart and sustainable digital future for European agriculture and rural areas**", and on the AOB request by Belgium on the situation in the **fruit sector** (apples and pears).

A **press conference** will be held at around 19.30 with Commissioner Hogan

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Video coverage in broadcast quality (MPEG4) and photo gallery: [http://nwsr.eu/p/208988](http://nwsr.eu/p/208988)

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1 This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the press office.
AGRICULTURE

Post 2020 Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform package: strategic plans

In public session the Council will exchange views on the Commission proposals that are part of the CAP reform package:

- a regulation on CAP strategic plans (9645/18 + ADD 1)
- a regulation on financing, managing and monitoring of the CAP (9634/18 + ADD 1)
- a regulation on a common market organisation of agricultural products (9556/18)

The debate will be based on a presidency's background document (8933/19), inviting ministers to answer the following questions:

- on reporting of milestones and performance review:
do you consider that an annual performance review and annual milestones, instead of biennial, should be set out, which would thus allow the implementation of the agreed progressive approach and tolerance as laid down in the new Article 121a, permitting a timely addressing of the potential weaknesses in the Member States’ progress of policy implementation?

- on establishing unit amounts for non-area/animal-based interventions:
do you consider necessary to provide in the Regulation for a certain flexibility as regards the establishment of annual unit amounts for the non-area/animal-based interventions (e.g. based on selected operations) without affecting the functioning of the key elements of the new delivery model, such as the annual performance clearance?

Key issues of the new delivery model

For the CAP post-2020, the Commission proposed to shift from a compliance-based to a performance-based policy focusing on outputs and results (the “new delivery model”). This principle has been generally backed up by member states.

The key constituting elements of the performance framework of the “new delivery model” are the governance system, the annual performance clearance and the performance review. Setting the unit amounts in advance within the CAP Strategic Plans is of key importance for the performance clearance. Matching expenditure with reported outputs (unit amount), the assessment of the governance systems, as well as the monitoring of implementation by reviewing the progress towards annual milestones based on result indicators are key elements too.

The Commission proposals

The Commission’s proposals for a CAP reform worth €365 billion introduce a new delivery model by which member states will have more flexibility in how to use their funds and will be able to tailor-make their programmes. A single set of 9 EU-wide economic, environmental and social objectives will be identified at EU level and each member state will have to draw up a Strategic Plan covering the whole programming period, setting out how it intends to meet those objectives, using both direct payments and rural development. The Commission will approve each plan to ensure consistency and the protection of the single market, and monitor the progress towards objectives and targets using a set of result indicators agreed at EU level.

The Commission proposals also outline new obligations and incentives for farmers on the front of environment and climate action. Direct payments will be conditional on enhanced environmental and climate requirements and member states will have to offer eco-schemes to support farmers in going beyond the mandatory requirements, funded with a share of their national direct payments’ allocations.
Moreover the new CAP will better target small and young farmers thereby facilitating generational renewal, and will try and foster greater use of knowledge and innovation.

**Clean planet for all: strategic long-term vision for a climate neutral economy - agricultural aspects**

In public session the Council will exchange views on the Commission's communication "Clean Planet for all", focusing in particular on its agricultural aspects ([7672/1/19 REV 1](#)).

The communication presents a vision of how the EU could contribute in the long-term to achieving the Paris Agreement goals. Its aim is to launch a broad debate involving European decision-makers and citizens on how Europe should prepare itself towards a 2050 horizon. In order to do that the communication highlights the transformations required in all sectors of the economy, including agriculture, with a view to achieving the transition to a net-zero GHG emissions economy.

After a brief presentation by the Commission, ministers will be invited to answer the following question:

- do ministers consider that the Commission Communication “A Clean Planet for all” sets the right direction for the EU’s long-term contribution to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement as far as the agricultural and forestry sectors are concerned? In this regard, where do Ministers see the most urgent need for action in the agricultural policy at national and EU level?

The communication 'A Clean Planet for all: A European strategic long-term vision for a prosperous, modern, competitive and climate neutral economy' ([15011/18](#)) was adopted by the Commission on 28 November 2018 and since then it has been already debated in various Council configurations (TTE Energy, Environment, and Competitiveness), in line with the presidency's aim to hold debates in all relevant sectorial Councils.

The EU should submit its long-term strategy by 2020 to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

**Trade related agricultural issues**

As a continuation of the practice at previous meetings of the "Agriculture and Fisheries" Council, the Commission will be invited to provide an update on the performance of EU agricultural trade ([8914/19](#)).

The Commission will in particular report on the latest developments in its diplomatic offensive to promote European agricultural products in the world, as well as on the already concluded and ongoing trade negotiations having an impact on EU agriculture, among others: Mercosur, Australia and New Zealand.

Ministers will have an opportunity to exchange views and reflect on the sensitivities of, and priorities and benefits for, EU agriculture in the context of the ongoing and upcoming free trade negotiations undertaken by the EU.
ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Declaration "A smart and sustainable digital future for European agriculture and rural areas"

The Commission will draw the attention of the Council to the recently signed declaration "A smart and sustainable digital future for European agriculture and rural areas" (7085/19).

Follow up to the judgment of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) in case C-528/16

The Dutch delegation will draw the attention of the Council to the follow up to the judgment of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) in case C-528/16.

In case C-528/16 the Court ruled that organisms obtained by mutagenesis are GMOs and are, in principle, subject to the obligations laid down by the GMO Directive. However, organisms obtained by mutagenesis techniques which have conventionally been used in a number of applications and have a long safety record are exempt from those obligations, on the understanding that the Member States are free to subject them, in compliance with EU law, to the obligations laid down by the directive or to other obligations.

Situation in the fruit sector

The Belgian delegation will inform the Council about the situation in the fruit sector with specific reference to peels and apples.

Fisheries: Regulation on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)

The French and Spanish delegations will draw the attention of the Council to their joint declaration that underlines the need to simplify the next European Maritime and Fisheries Fund.