



Expert Group on Farmland: another step towards an EU land directive

The first meeting of the European Commission’s Expert Group on Farmland marks an important step towards recognising farmland as a strategic common good that requires public regulation at the European level. For European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC), this expert group is the result of years of mobilisations by peasant organisations, researchers, and civil society demanding action against land concentration and speculation in Europe.

One of the core topics of the meeting was the ongoing pilot project for an EU Land Observatory — a long-standing demand from ECVC. A central challenge for this future observatory will be to identify who the actual beneficiary owners of farm units are (i.e., who effectively receives CAP subsidies) and whether these beneficiaries are actively farming the land. This is essential to fight the growing capitalisation of CAP subsidies through complex ownership structures and shares in agricultural companies. The observatory must therefore go beyond a simple data collection platform. For ECVC, the observatory project must include participatory governance involving small-scale farmers’ organisations and civil society, as well as regularly publishing reports on the state of farmland markets in Europe to identify the effective beneficiaries of CAP subsidies and land ownership structures.

“The CAP cannot continue to subsidise land concentration. Public money must support active farmers, not absentee landowners, investment funds, or corporate structures accumulating land through financial mechanisms,” said ECVC representative Daniel Long following the meeting.

While the Commission reiterated that land markets fall primarily under the jurisdiction of Member States, the majority of participants emphasised the impact of the CAP, renewable energy support policies, and carbon and biodiversity credits on land markets, land prices, land use, and farm establishment. The conclusion is unequivocal: the EU has a productivist land policy that favours the development of a capitalist agricultural model at the expense of small-scale, diversified, more resilient, and more sustainable agriculture.

ECVC also welcomes the forthcoming studies on the financialisation of land that the Commission is presenting. It is high time to highlight this worrying trend that is gradually transforming agriculture: from a diversified model, rooted in local areas and focused on food production, to a capitalist model more oriented towards shareholder returns than towards producing quality food.

Notes for editor

ECVC invites policymakers, civil society organisations, researchers, and journalists to participate in the upcoming [Food Justice Forum](#) event taking place on **9 June in Brussels**, where discussions on land governance, agrarian reform, and food sovereignty in Europe will continue.

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