



With a key European Parliament vote only days away, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier De Schutter, urged EU legislators to change the course of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform before development concerns are excluded.

"Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy means high stakes not only for European farmers, but for millions of others worldwide who are affected by EU policies," the UN expert said. "Development concerns should be made an essential part of CAP reform, and the window of opportunity for doing so is rapidly closing."

"MEPs must not squander the opportunity they now have to bring the proposals into line with the requirements of the human right to food and the EU's development promises: article 21 of the EU Treaty and the Policy Coherence for Development require no less," Mr. De Schutter stressed.

In June 2012, MEPs in the Development Committee voted unanimously in favour of monitoring and taking into account CAP development impacts. However, their views were not included in the compromise amendments drawn up in the Agriculture Committee in December, and will now be voted on as individual amendments in the 23-24 January vote. CAP reform will subsequently be voted on in plenary (March-April), where MEPs will have a chance to put forward alternative amendments.

"Opportunities are running out for development-proofing the CAP," the Special Rapporteur warned. "In order for the CAP to work for farmers inside and outside the EU, we must undertake detailed monitoring of the impacts of EU farm exports and imports on developing countries, consult developing world farmer organizations, and conduct a proper assessment of the impacts on the right to food."

Mr. De Schutter also called on MEPs to ensure mandatory crop rotation and support for leguminous protein crops as part of CAP 'greening.' "The EU's massive dependency on soya and maize imports to feed European livestock drives habitat destruction, natural resource depletion and unsustainable production patterns in the developing world that benefit large corporations rather than poor farmers," he said. "The reformed CAP must encourage EU farmers to diversify and grow crops for local use within agroecological systems."

Article 21 of the EU Treaty requires that the action of the EU on the international scene be guided, among other things, by human rights. The EU Policy Coherence for Development, launched in 2005, aims at ensuring 'that all EU policy areas with an external impact be designed to support and not contradict the fight against poverty and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, as well as the fulfilment of human rights, including gender equality and social, economic and environmental rights.'

*Olivier De Schutter* was appointed the Special Rapporteur on the right to food in May 2008 by the UN Human Rights Council. He is independent from any government or organization. Learn more about the mandate and work of the Special Rapporteur, log on: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Food/Pages/FoodIndex.aspx>

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Check - "[The Common Agricultural Policy towards 2020: The role of the European Union in supporting the realization of the right to food](#)," by Olivier De Schutter:

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