



## Closing remarks

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## CONCLUDING REMARKS

*Webinar on Agricultural finance and EAFRD financial instruments in France*

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- Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen,
- My name is Michael Pielke and I am the Head of Unit F3 “[name]”
- First, I would like to thank the translators for the work today and Bruno for moderating again our webinar.
- I also would like to thank all speakers for the detailed and open presentations, which showed us a rather surprising, but well achieved progress with the financial instruments, despite the crisis.
- It is not easy to speak about loans and guarantees when the economy is in general shrinking, some sectors are almost closed for months, businesses are suffering and people are losing jobs and incomes.

We have to acknowledge that we will face many more challenges in the years to come, and that joint efforts will be needed to bring back the economy on track.

And I hope that our financial instruments will have a role to play in tis recovery.

- We have to be ready to step in and support the future investment and operational decisions of farmers, food-processors and rural business entrepreneurs.

- The new CAP and CPR legal basis offer huge flexibility in the way financial instruments can contribute:
  - By simplifying implementation;
  - By offering more combination options;
  - By keeping eligibility requirements at the lowest possible level allowing managing authorities to target the instruments
  - By allowing stand-alone working capital finance as a “bridge finance” between the current financial and economic crisis and the new recovery period we expect to start in the coming months, and why not already this year.
- I believe that our financial instruments can successfully build a road to green transition and support agriculture in its contribution to the main objectives of our society – to produce high-quality standard and to protect the environment.
- The case of Nouvelle-Aquitaine discussed today is one example that this is possible. It may be a small step, a first step, but a step in the right direction. I am sure that others will follow.
- We also learned that farmers maintain an interest to modernise and invest on their farms, like in Occitanie, even in crisis periods.
- And we also saw how complementarity can be achieved between regional financial instruments and national initiatives, and how important is this for agriculture. Such synergy helps the sustainable

development of the sector.

- We presented our results from the study on the financing needs and according to the data, there is still plenty to be done in France to be ensured that all businesses in need of finance receive sufficient support.
- I do hope that the new CAP Strategic Plan of France will reflect on that; an issue also specified in our recommendations to the country.

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- At the end I would like to re-call that the time has come for us to start thinking of how we make our future better and ‘greener’. How we can reduce the negative impacts on the environment and climate without negatively affecting farm incomes and farm produce, and keeping high-quality standards.

The Green Deal is not a mirage or just a political wish. It is a path we have to take if we want our next generations to enjoy a climate-friendly and healthy way of living. It is a set of complex decisions to be made by all sides and I do not undermine the difficulties that will be experienced.

In this context, it is important for us that we use all available tools, including also financial instruments. We can finance green projects, the transformation of farm practices and farm specializations, the need for more ICT investments, and in this way to use wisely the

limited finances the governments have at their disposal.

The Covid-19 crisis stretched to the maximum the public finances at all levels. This is why we need to use wisely all possibilities and financial instruments can help.

My expectations are that France and its regions will carefully analyse the options for using financial instruments under the CAP, which to start from the off-set (i.e. 2023).

In this context, my unit stands ready to help the French national managing authority or any regional authority interested in the subject by providing coaching, training or serious bilateral discussions on the new CAP Strategic Plan, the advantages of using financial instruments and the way they can be incorporated in the new policy mix.

I thank to all 250 participants that joined our event. I hope you have enjoyed it. Our next stop will be in Poland, on 11 May, and I would expect to see you again there.

I wish you a nice afternoon and a healthy year ahead.