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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Timmermans
on behalf of the European Commission
(4.4.2022)

The European Climate Law¹ lays out the route to achieving EU climate neutrality by 2050 while ensuring continuous progress in adaptation to climate change. To follow this pathway, the Land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) Regulation review introduces an ambitious EU net removals target of 310 Million tonnes of CO₂-equivalents by 2030.

Regarding the first question, the proposal promotes synergies between mitigation and adaptation actions, such as improved forest management, fire prevention, agroecology and agroforestry, soil carbon increase, and wetland restoration. Such solutions can provide significant co-benefits for other land challenges, including biodiversity conservation, food security and combating desertification, as acknowledged by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change². These solutions are particularly relevant for Spain, as highlighted by the Commission recommendations for its draft Common Agriculture Policy strategic plan³ and the analysis of its recovery and resilience plan⁴. These solutions are also promoted by other EU initiatives, such as the EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change⁵, the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030⁶ and the EU Soil Strategy for 2030⁷. The Sustainable Carbon Cycles Communication⁸ sets out an action plan for all landowners to make carbon removals a new green business model.

Regarding the last two questions, the enhanced effort is distributed between Member States based on their recent mitigation performance and land area. Instead of complex rules and projections, as is the case under the current LULUCF Regulation, the proposed national targets lead to a fair distribution of effort based on transparent criteria and contribute to the overall objective of simplification.

¹Regulation (EU) 2019/1119

²IPCC, 2019: Climate Change and Land: an IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems. <http://www.ipcc.ch/srccl>

³SWD(2020) 374 final

⁴SWD (2021) 147 final

⁵COM/2021/82 final

⁶COM/2020/380 final

⁷COM/2021/699 final

⁸COM (2021) 800 final