

19th of December 2023

Dear Minister Clarinval,

We are writing to you as a group of leading organisations of the [EU Food Policy Coalition](#) – a broad group of more than 50 civil society organisations with interdisciplinary and consolidated expertise in the EU food system. Together we are working towards policy integration and alignment at EU level to facilitate the transition to sustainable food systems.

Overwhelming scientific evidence shows that [we need to transform our food systems](#) in order to make the food we produce and consume healthier, more socially just and better for the environment, ensuring that our food system respects the [planetary boundaries](#) that will allow humanity to continue to thrive. Additionally, an increasing number of citizens are expressing a desire for healthy and sustainable food that is more accessible and affordable. In this context, we appreciate that the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union is planning multiple events that could serve as platforms to discuss policies and actions that would drive this transformative change.

In accordance with the Article 11(1)(2) and Article 15(1) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), Article 298 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) which require institutional transparency and inclusivity, and in light of the expertise and experience that FPC participants can bring, **we would appreciate receiving an invitation to join the Informal Fisheries Council scheduled for the 24-25 March in Bruges and the Informal Agricultural Council scheduled for 7-9 April in Limburg.** Representatives of industrial farmer's unions are regularly invited to these ministerial meetings and given the opportunity to share their perspectives with ministers. We believe that other food system actors, including civil society organisations, should be allowed to participate in these events to guarantee a balanced representation of stakeholders and civil society.

Additionally, we express our sincere interest in attending and actively participating in the debates on food and agriculture that the Belgium Presidency will promote and facilitate. We are confident that the perspective offered by FPC participants could enhance the discussions and contribute valuable insights.

Your consideration of FPC participants join in these events is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Ester Asin, *Director*, WWF European Policy Office

Patrick ten Brick, *Secretary General*, European Environmental Bureau

Ariel Brunner, *Regional Director*, BirdLife Europe and Central Asia

Marco Contiero, *EU Policy Director on Agriculture*, Greenpeace European Unit

Peter Defranceschi, *Head of Brussels Office and Global Food City Program*, ICLEI

Marta Messa, *Secretary General*, Slow Food

Dr. Milka Sokolovic, *Director General*, European Public Health Alliance

