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Benefit from the EU methane strategy for climate protection and clean air in agriculture

Dear Executive Vice-President Timmermans,

The EU Commission intends to adopt its Methane Strategy in mid-October. We welcome the cross-sectoral approach that includes agricultural sources which represent 53% of anthropogenic methane emissions. As the process is nearing its conclusion, Deutsche Umwelthilfe (DUH) reiterates the demand for binding reduction targets for extremely climate-damaging methane emissions from the agricultural sector.

To align with the Paris Agreement and the objective of reaching climate neutrality, key issues in the agricultural sector must be addressed. This requires moving swiftly towards implementation of concrete measures. The new strategy can be a suitable instrument for that.

Since 2013, the share of methane emissions from agriculture in the EU has been increasing, predominantly from intensive livestock farming. Therefore, binding targets to reduce emissions are urgently needed in order to meet climate targets. In addition, methane is a precursor of ground-level ozone, which is harmful to human health and plant growth. Reducing methane emissions can therefore also reduce ozone pollution in Europe.

The forthcoming methane strategy provides a key opportunity to support the implementation of the Paris Agreement. But to do so, the strategy must include concrete and binding reduction targets for agricultural methane emissions. EU commission and EU Member states have a high responsibility to enforce climate protection and air pollution control, therefore the methane strategy must be one major vehicle to realize methane emission reduction in the agricultural sector.

With kind regards

Sascha Müller-Kraenner
Executive Director