

## OPENING SPEECH

On the occasion of the opening of the workshop

### "Support to development of a national strategy for adaptation of agriculture to climate change in the Republic of Belarus"

Organised in the framework of the project

#### "ClimaEast"

Hotel "Viktoria", Minsk

Friday, 21 April 2017, 9.30 – 10.30

### OPENING REMARKS of Mr Philippe Bernhard

Sector manager for environment and climate change – Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Belarus

Dear Mr Kachanovskiy,  
Dear Colleagues,

The EU has adopted a strategy for climate change adaptation in 2013. It is not a policy in the traditional term based on mandatory regulations.

The strategy focuses on three key objectives:

1) **Promoting action by Member States:** The Commission will encourage all Member States to adopt comprehensive adaptation strategies and will provide funding. It will also support adaptation in cities by launching a voluntary commitment based on the Covenant of Mayors initiative.

2) **Better informed decision-making** by addressing gaps in knowledge about adaptation and further developing the European **climate adaptation platform (Climate-ADAPT)** as the 'one-stop shop' for adaptation information in Europe.

3) **Promoting adaptation in key vulnerable sectors such as agriculture**, fisheries and cohesion policy, ensuring that Europe's infrastructure is made more resilient, and promoting the use of insurance against natural and man-made disasters.

In the specific case of climate change adaptation in the agriculture sector, which our today's main topic, several actions are already taken at EU level.

The **Common agricultural policy** does now definitely take into account risks linked to climate change.

The **system of direct payments to farmers, the first pillar** of the Common agricultural policy, aims at enhancing environmental performance through direct payments supporting agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and the environment.

Similarly, the **European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, which funds the EU rural policy fund, also called the Second pillar** of the EU Common agriculture policy, can now support "the shift toward a low-carbon and climate resilient economy in the agriculture, food and forestry sectors".

It is important to notice that these policies add up to member states policies. Therefore, there is a vast array of climate change-friendly agriculture policies available for sharing in the EU.

I am convinced that today's seminar will bring interesting exchanges as we will share experiences in Belarus, in three other EaP countries, and thanks to the presence of ClimaEast project experts, in the EU.

I would like to wish you a fruitful seminar.

Thank you for your attention.