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SERBIA 2008 PROGRESS REPORT

accompanying the

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION

TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL

Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2008-2009

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4.2.2. Agriculture and fisheries

Some progress has been made in the area of **agriculture** and there have been some improvements to the administrative capacity

In the area of **rural development** the government adopted three regulations defining the distribution and use of subsidies in 2008 in the areas of rural tourism, support to internally

displaced persons, and support to the Roma community. However, a strategic plan for rural

development and a multi-annual rural development programme have not been adopted.

An

inter-ministerial mechanism for coordination of policies related to rural development has not

been established. The rural development sector is in need of qualified staff, and the framework legislation on rural development, which is intended to serve as a basis for the establishment of a national agency for rural payments, has not yet been adopted

Concerning the wine sector, Serbia has strengthened its administrative capacity in order to

prepare for the establishment of a vineyard cadastre. However, a sustainable system for vineyard and wine inspections has still to be established. A new law on wine has not yet been

adopted. A national system of oenology laboratories has not yet been established.

The government has adopted four regulations on organic production. These regulations support the development of the sector and accredit the first certification organisations.

They

represent important progress in terms of alignment with the *acquis*.

In the area of **food safety**, Serbia has still to adopt framework legislation which complies with

the *acquis*. Some progress has been made in clarifying the allocation of responsibilities between the relevant inspectorates. The full implementation of the new division of

responsibilities and in particular cooperation between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Health is subject to the adoption of this new framework legislation.

No progress has been made with regard to the upgrading of food establishments. Serbia has

been listed as an "approved third country" in the milk sector for treated milk products

however, no establishment has yet been approved for export to the EU. Serbia has made some progress in the continued development of a **veterinary** information management system. Progress has been made in extending animal identification and registration of their movements to a larger number of animal species. Following the entry into force of the veterinary law, implementing legislation has been adopted. However, the Veterinary Directorate is in need of ongoing training activities and its management capacity remains limited. Decentralisation measures and training activities aimed at strengthening the field veterinary service have proved insufficient. Furthermore, Serbia needs to amend the framework veterinary law to bring it into line with the *acquis*, and also to adopt a new law on animal welfare.

Progress has continued in the upgrading of **laboratories**, notably in the food chain area. However, an administrative structure for the management of reference laboratories for food chain control has still to be established. A laboratory information management system for veterinary laboratories has not yet been integrated with the veterinary information system.

There is little progress to report in the **phytosanitary** area. The main development was the adoption by the Ministry of Agriculture of an annual programme on plant health for 2008. A plant health law and a law on plant protection products have not yet been adopted. A phytosanitary laboratory information management system has not yet been developed. In the **fisheries** sector there has been no progress in the areas of marketing standards for fisheries products or with regard to structural policy.

Overall, Serbia is in a relatively advanced stage of preparation in the area of agriculture to fulfil SAA obligations. However, further efforts are needed in order to allow Serbia to better manage agricultural policy and to continue reforms in the sector. An appropriate legislative framework needs to be adopted and further efforts are necessary in order to strengthen the administrative capacity in the field of food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy. Further efforts are needed in the fisheries area in order to comply with the relevant parts of the *acquis* and prepare for the implementation of structural assistance.

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