



5th June 2024

Dear Council of the European Union,

We are writing to you as a global collective of farmers highly concerned about the European Council's current position on the Green Claims Directive regarding references of the Product Environmental Footprint (PEF) - the methodology to substantiate claims.

Recent communications suggest that the European Council is endorsing PEF or PEFCR, to underpin the Green Claims Directive, which will be voted upon on 17 June 2024. **The PEF methodology unfairly favours synthetic, fossil fuel-derived materials over natural fibres, misrepresenting natural fibres as harmful to the environment and therefore posing a significant risk of injustice to farmers whose lives depend on the production of these natural fibres.**

We farmers are custodians of our land, and this comes with enormous responsibility. Our farms are often small, family-based, multi-generational operations, and we are yet to meet a farmer who doesn't want to hand their farm on in a better state than they found it; this is our definition of sustainability, our legacy, our heritage.

Farmers are already presented with significant challenges as a result of climate change, including constantly recurring crises and uncertainties. If the EU introduces policy that favours cheap, synthetic fibres used by the fast fashion industry, the struggle for farmers will become even more severe and they may have no option but to give up on farming practices and providing food and fibre to humanity.

Our farming practices involve supporting landscapes and communities, contributing to soil health and protecting biodiversity. These proven positive effects that result from responsible farming practices are all overlooked by the current PEF methodology. **While we fully support meaningful sustainability labelling of clothing products based on accurate and complete methodologies, it is clear that the PEF methodology is not adequate to assess the environmental performance of agricultural products and will therefore enable greenwashing by fast fashion brands.**

It is also important to highlight that the Technical Secretariat for the PEFCR for Apparel and Footwear has set a prohibitively high cost to participate in the voting process, meaning that only large brands with ample funding can afford to be a voting member. None of the 26 members are farmers. In fact, decisions are voted on and agreed by a two-thirds majority - there are 14 total voting members, 8 of which have a synthetic

business model to protect. This highlights the extreme disadvantage for farmers like us up against the well-funded and powerful fast fashion industry.

If the European Council votes to include the PEF methodology on 17 June 2024, the Green Claims Directive will accelerate the growth of fast fashion and put farmers' livelihoods at risk. This directly contradicts the EU's promise to make "fast fashion out of fashion" as well "support our farmers in a time when they are dealing with numerous challenges and concerns."

We therefore urge you to reconsider the use of the current PEF and PEFCR methodology and ensure that this policy truly reflects impact of natural fibre production and does not risk damaging the livelihoods of farmers.

Sincerely,

[INSERT NAMES]