

EUROPEAN BIOGAS e-CONFERENCE 2020



Speech Pekka Pesonen

Secretary General of COPA-COGECA

Session: **Biogas: a game changer**

Opportunities of biogas in the farming sector

Main points:

- Farmers and agri-cooperatives believe that **continuing to foster the development of biogas plants** to produce renewable energy for heating/cooling, electricity and transport from manure could assist the EU in meeting its renewable energy targets and mitigating CH₄-emissions in the livestock sector.
- The EU's GHG emissions from agriculture (including livestock) saw a **reduction of 22.2%** between 1990-2016 in the EU-28. This was due to the reductions in agricultural emissions of methane by 21% (enteric fermentation by 22% and manure management by 17%) and nitrous oxide by 19%.
- To achieve climate neutrality by 2050 and contributing to the phase out fossil fuels, we consider that **circular systems must be promoted** for the production of biogas from agricultural residues and by-products, food and beverage industry, fisheries, aquaculture and European crops. This is a good opportunity for our sector to contribute to the achievement of this objective.
- **Methane emissions** from agriculture cannot be completely avoided because these greenhouse gases originate from natural processes. Carbon dioxide removals by feed biomass should be fully accounted to balance methane emissions in greenhouse gas accounting.
- Manure management and the **use of manure as source of biogas** has a significant methane reduction potential, and this should be seen as part of the toolbox along the role played by grassland in carbon removals.
- We support a wider use of by-products from the agro-food industry, fisheries, aquaculture and secondary crops, which need to be authorised in the production of biogas and improve the efficiency of the digester. It needs to be stressed that the use of such secondary crops, even food and feed crops does not trigger demand for additional land.

- Farmers and agri-cooperatives consider important to promote **the uniform application** for EU and non-EU biofuels, bioliquids and biomass fuels **of the sustainability greenhouse gas emissions saving criteria.**
- For the agriculture sector, it is crucial to be able to continue to invest and innovate on infrastructure, storage and logistics and on new and scalable technologies. For this **strong public support and coherent policies are needed.**
- **Some of the barriers** for biogas from waste and agricultural residues: insufficient framework conditions, lack of market access, localisation and permits, agricultural structure and economy
- **Incentives for biogas** from waste and agricultural residues: favorable framework conditions for investment, economic support for project development, focus on size and local biogas plants

