



Brussels, 10 February 2016

Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis

Health and Food Safety

European Commission

Brussels

Dear Commissioner,

I am confident that the European Commission has been following with the greatest attention the recent events that have touched upon the issue of *xylella fastidiosa*, and in particular the Tribunal of Lecce investigation notices and related scientific support, as well as the decision of the Regional Administrative Tribunal (TAR) to ask the European Court of Justice its formal opinion on the plan of olive trees cutting based upon the EU decision.

The TAR is asking the European Court of Justice to evaluate whether the principles of adequacy and proportionality preclude the application of the decision to chop down the trees, while also citing the lack of scientific analysis proving that *xylella* would in fact be the cause of the olive trees' infection.

The TAR underlined it "shares the doubts" brought by the plaintiffs in their appeal, in which they called into question the eradication plan's compliance under European Union law.

The letter of formal notice sent by the Commission to Italy on the non-respect of the EU decision on *xylella*, underlining that Italy is not doing all it can to eradicate and contain the *xylella* outbreak, will have to take into account the opinion of the Court of Justice.

In the meanwhile, the risk is that the European Commission could pursue in a mistake in keeping on applying a protocol for the eradication of the *xylella* pathogen, that does not take into due account all the recent scientific information acquired nor the evolution of the situation on the ground and that appears to be outdated by new findings, research and technical successful responses.

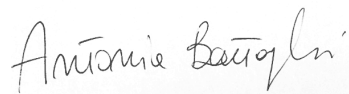
Peacelink, with the Committee Spazi Popolari, believes that a new European strategy in Apulia is necessary and that it should start by the downgrading of the *xylella*, in this particular variant, from list A1 of EPPO to list A2, a measure that would allow a different approach to the issue of trees drying out phenomena in Apulia.

Keeping *xylella fastidiosa* in A1 list involves draconian measures such as quarantine, a strict plan of cutting and the continued use of chemicals, measures that imply high impact consequences. We believe that pursuing in the decision of eradication is now unnecessary and does not represent the solution to the problem. There are too many factors that have not been duly investigated and that would require a more thorough plan of action.

We call on you to ensure that all available data and evidence on the issue, its important evolutions and findings are now fully reviewed and taken into account. We stand ready to assist and are at your disposal.

Yours sincerely,

Antonia Battaglia

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Antonia Battaglia". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Peacelink Brussels

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