

STATEMENT BY CSOs AT THE 32nd FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA

We, 55 delegates, representatives of family farmers, rural women and youth, fisherfolk, agricultural workers, pastoralists, indigenous peoples, cooperatives, consumers, NGOs, national, regional and international CSOs from 20 countries met for the first time in the history of the consultations in virtual mode, on **28 and 29 March 2022**.

We acknowledge and welcome the efforts of FAO in accompanying civil society to discuss issues on the agenda of the Regional Conference and other priority issues, in order to formulate proposals and recommendations. However, the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of these recommendations remains a concern.

After discussing the specific items on the agenda of the Conference and other key issues relevant to the region, including:

- The management of crises affecting the agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries sectors;
- The implementation of the UN Decade for Family Farming (2019-2028);
- The implementation of the voluntary guidelines on artisanal fisheries;
- The restoration of ecosystems for a more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable transformation of agri-food systems in Africa;
- The promotion of investment and trade for competitive agri-food systems: opportunities and progress of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA);
- The promotion of Women, Youth and the Rural Poor in Inclusive Food Systems;
- The pastoral crisis;
- The popularization of the declaration of the rights of peasants and other rural people;
- The relations between FAO and African civil society organisations;

Hereby recommend:

to governments :

- To set up a permanent and multi-actor mechanism (Government, CSOs and Partners...) to manage crises affecting rural producers;
- Adopt budget lines dedicated to the establishment and functioning of national multi-stakeholder committees, as well as to the development and implementation of national action plans;
- Implement national and regional legal texts on artisanal fisheries based on the basic principles advocated by the Voluntary Guidelines for Artisanal Fisheries;
- Integrate peasant agro-ecology into public agricultural policies;

- To train stakeholders (CSOs, development actors, etc.) in the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA);
- Strengthen appropriate financing mechanisms for rural women and youth;
- To secure pastoral systems;
- To take into account the Declaration of Peasants' Rights in public policies and ensure that the rights of peasants and other people living in rural areas are respected;

To the FAO

- Set up a support system for the development and implementation of national and regional action plans involving regional and national offices;
- Strengthen the support for the popularisation of the Voluntary Guidelines on Small-scale Fisheries;
- To facilitate access to green funds by agricultural producers;
- Accompany the actors: Pan African Farmers Organisation (PAFO), La Via Campesina, Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA), International Cooperative Alliance - Africa, African Women Fish Processors and Traders Network (AWFISHNET), Billital Maroobe Network (BMR), Global Convergence of Struggles for Land and Water - West Africa (CGLTE-OA), ... in the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA);
- Strengthen the support of actors in the development and implementation of gender sensitive programmes for the economic empowerment of rural women, rural youth and agricultural entrepreneurs;
- Accompany actors in the implementation of pastoral texts;
- Accompany actors in the popularisation of the Declaration of Peasant Rights and other people living in rural areas;
- To technically support the CSOs in the creation and functioning of a permanent secretariat for the FAO consultations, in order to follow up on the recommendations resulting from the different consultations, to share relevant information and knowledge between the producers' organisations and to support the Steering Committee in the preparation of the regional consultations;
- To energize the relationship between FAO country offices and local CSOs;
- Strengthen the effective participation of CSOs in the design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of country programmes;

Finally, we commit ourselves to continue the process of structuring, informing and sensitizing our members at the grassroots level, around the popularization of texts and the development of local production initiatives.

Malabo, 29 March 2022