



## G20 Agriculture Ministers' Meeting

# High Level Ministerial Discussion 2: **"Sustaining Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for Food Security"**

Address

by

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16 June 2023



*Excellences,  
Distinguished guests,*

It is an honour to join you today.

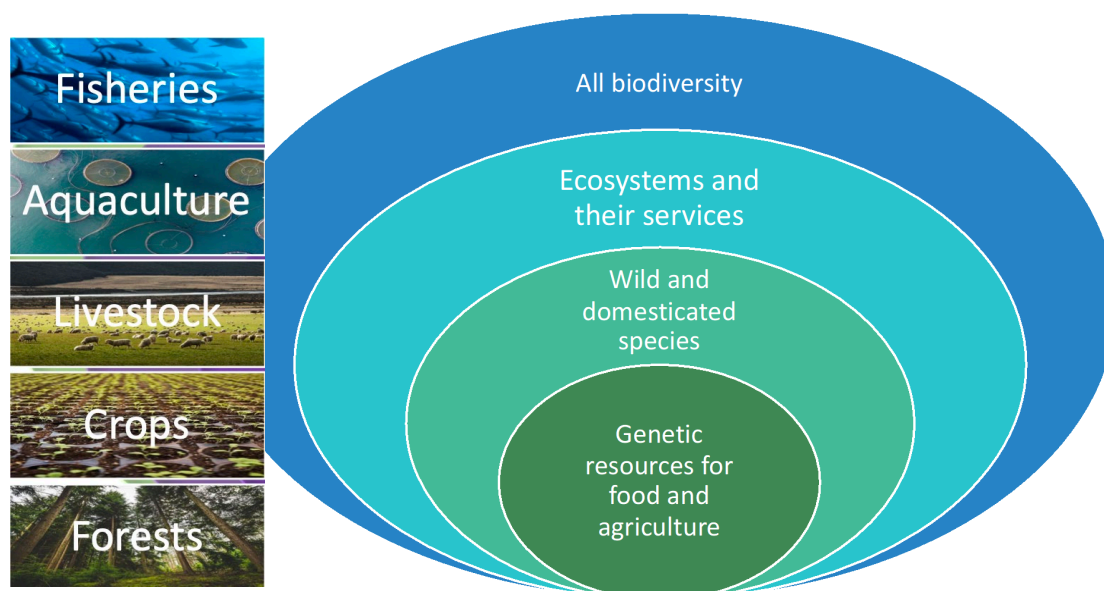
In recent years, G20 Members, and many others, have responded to the increasing understanding of the importance of biodiversity for the quality of everyone's life.

Ambitious commitments have been made to:

- conserve biodiversity;
- use its components sustainably; and
- fairly and equitably share the benefits arising from its use.

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## Biodiversity for food and agriculture



Despite progress, today we are facing alarming rates of biodiversity loss, jeopardising food security and nutrition, poverty eradication, prevention of natural disasters and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The urgency is clear. As many as 828 million people worldwide faced hunger in 2021, and 3.1 billion could not afford a healthy diet in 2020.

Without biodiversity, our fight would be lost.

We need **genetic diversity** to adapt agrifood systems to climate change, emerging pests, pathogens and changing ecological conditions.

We need **species diversity** for diverse foods – from domesticated crops and livestock to wild foods; for stable and productive soils to grow crops; for pollination and the myriad of essential services provided by other species.

We need **food diversity** from biodiversity to provide healthy and nutritious foods to all consumers globally.

We need **healthy ecosystems** to provide water, regulate the climate and provide resilience against disasters.

Yet, many drivers of biodiversity loss can be found in inappropriate agricultural practices.

Biodiversity is indispensable to food security.

Biodiversity loss is strongly linked to land use changes and to agriculture.

Improved practices can help address trade-offs, maintain ecosystems, improve land and soil quality, reduce input use, and strengthen the resilience and adaptation capacity of farming systems to extreme weather events linked to climate change.

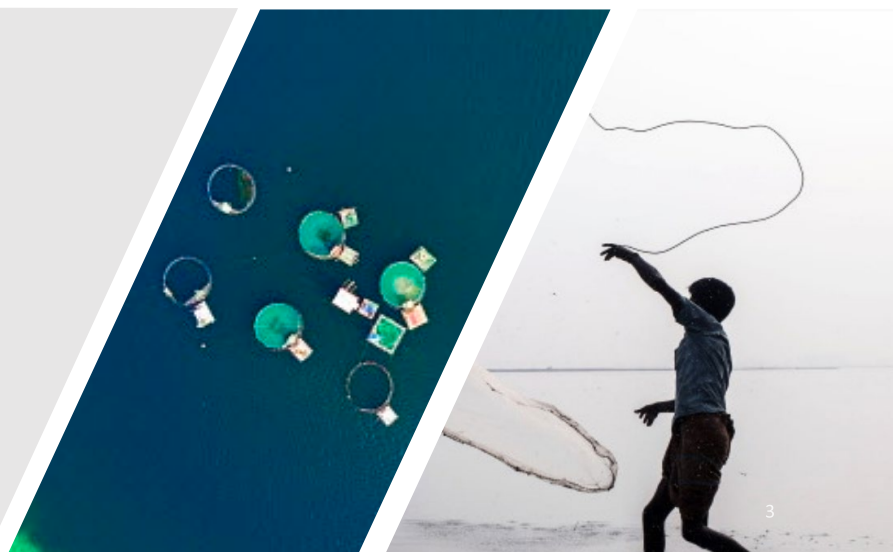
Because agricultural trade can generate negative environmental externalities and affect biodiversity, countries are increasingly embedding environmental provisions in trade agreements.

These provisions aim to address environmental issues, including biodiversity, sustainable management of forests and fisheries, and climate change.

Over the past years, the number of trade agreements containing environmental provisions, as well as the depth of these provisions have expanded significantly.



There is no food security without biodiversity



The interlinkages between food security and biodiversity are recognized in the recently adopted Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework – which sets out an ambitious pathway for a world living in harmony with nature.

More than half of the 23 targets for 2030 are directly related to agrifood systems.

The achievement of the Framework therefore relies on the active engagement of the agrifood actors.

Following the adoption of the Framework, countries are now working to revise their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.

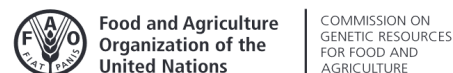
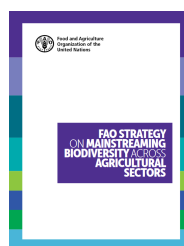
Agriculture ministries must be actively engaged in this process to ensure that the biodiversity commitments are holistically implemented, considering environmental degradation, social impacts and economic opportunities for the agricultural sectors.

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

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## FAO's work on biodiversity in agricultural sectors (crop and livestock production, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture)

- Neutral and open forum where biodiversity-related policies are discussed, among others, and agreements negotiated among Members
- Biodiversity instruments and mechanisms
- Presence in over 130 countries
- Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan



My message is clear: agrifood systems must be part of the solution to the biodiversity and climate crises.

Agrifood systems used to suffer, but now can be a buffer and continue to be a contributor.

Family farmers, small-scale producers, fisherfolk and fish farmers, livestock keepers and pastoralists, foresters and forest-dependant people, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and youth, are on the frontline – managing and using biodiversity every day.

FAO will continue supporting their livelihoods and working at country, regional and global levels to transform agrifood systems, for the benefit of:

- human well-being;
- a healthy planet; and
- economic prosperity for all people.

## Guides, tools and instruments for sustaining biodiversity for food security



Through our Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors, FAO works with Members and partners to scale up biodiversity-friendly practices in crop and livestock production, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture.

Our support includes practical guides, tools and other normative or policy instruments for the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries and Aquaculture, sustainable forest management, diversification approaches, integrated pest management and agroecology.

FAO co-leads with UNEP the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration – partnering to prevent, halt, and reverse the degradation of ecosystems on every continent and in every ocean.

Through a holistic multi-sectoral approach, let us also ensure:

- implementation of the One Health approach for the health of people, animals, plants and the environment, including tackling antimicrobial resistance; and
- implementation of actions on climate change, which are also biodiversity-positive.

There is no one-size-fits all solution to respond to the challenges we face.

Policies that support implementation of biodiversity-friendly practices can, however, contribute to resilience, sustainable development, the halting and reversal of biodiversity loss, and climate change adaptation and mitigation; thereby, helping us to achieve food security and nutrition for all, today and tomorrow.

Implementation of biodiversity commitments must be supported by adequate finances, human and infrastructure capacities, and strengthened and sustained efforts.

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Let us work together for the Four Betters: better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life, to realize the 2030 Agenda's vision of leaving no one behind.

I look forward to our dialogue today.

Thank you.