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منظمة  
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للأمم المتحدة

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# FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

## Thirty-eighth Session

Georgetown, Guyana, 11–13 March 2024 and 18–21 March 2024

**Statement by the Spokesperson of the Scientific and Academic Committee**

Chairperson and distinguished delegates,

1. We thank the Members for the opportunity to share the reflections of the Scientific and Academic Sector.
2. Firstly, we would like to stress that:
  - a. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), especially SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), we need policies to transition current agrifood systems towards more sustainable and resilient systems. This should be done in a manner that does not jeopardize the economic, social and environmental foundations of food security and nutrition for present and future generations.
  - b. Biodiversity loss in current agrifood systems is accelerating, with negative effects on soil health, water quality, deforestation and greenhouse gas emissions. This increases vulnerability to climate change.
  - c. Despite progress, child malnutrition is worsening and accessibility to healthy diets is limited by the cost of nutritious foods. Meanwhile, unhealthy foods (such as those containing agrochemical residues and ultra-processed foods) are widely available, promoted and consumed. This increases the risk of preventable chronic diseases, poverty, climate instability, as well as the deterioration of global health.
  - d. Sufficient evidence is available to support the multiple benefits of agroecology, and this form of farming has, therefore, been recognized as a strategy for achieving the human right to food and the implementation of international legislative instruments (such as the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas).
  - e. A systemic transformation of agrifood systems is required to ensure healthy and sustainable diets for all, the reduction of malnutrition and the human right to adequate food.
3. We, therefore, call on you, as Member representatives, to take into account the evidence, and aim through your decisions and actions to:
  - a. Promote the transition from agro-industrial systems (monoculture) to agroecological systems on all scales, in order to transform agrifood systems towards socioecological resilience and reduce processes that contribute to crises in health, food, energy and so forth. This approach

Documents can be consulted at [www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org)

is in line with FAO Resolution 7/2019 on “Further integration of sustainable agricultural approaches, including agroecology, in the future planning activities of FAO”.

- b. Promote inclusive food systems, in which mainly marginalized sectors, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women, infants, children and young people exercise their right to adequate food and to dignified life strategies.
  - c. Develop and implement proposals to reduce food waste and loss.
  - d. Strengthen capacities among stakeholders in the agricultural sector and in food systems for the transition to agroecological systems, recognizing the value of ancestral know-how and promoting interculturality, and the exchange of knowledge and its application for the participatory development of locally adapted innovations.
  - e. Promote policies and projects that cooperatively develop knowledge for food security and sovereignty, and that seek holistic solutions to ecological and social problems in agro-industrial food systems.
  - f. Carry out regional efforts focusing on the promotion of healthy, biodiverse, functional, accessible and socio-culturally adapted diets, to revive native and creole agrobiodiversity, as well as indigenous foods, through education programmes, nutritional and public policies that strengthen agroecology, biodiverse peasant agriculture and fair prices. In addition, promote policies to regulate the advertising and sale of unhealthy foods.
  - g. Generate scientific evidence on sustainable food systems and a healthy diet as indicated above, through participatory, cross-disciplinary action and research, free of conflicts of interest, fostering ethical responsibility, inclusiveness and social justice, particularly for Indigenous Peoples, local communities and small-scale family farming.
  - h. Strengthen multisectoral coordination between designers and implementers of regulations and public policy, together with academia, civil society and social movements, in order to advance agroecology, sustainable food systems, the access to and protection of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, and the associated traditional knowledge, respecting processes of free, prior and informed consultation, and the fair and equitable sharing of the resulting benefits.
4. We reiterate our commitment to contributing knowledge and innovations aimed at transforming agrifood systems towards healthy, inclusive and sustainable processes.