

World Food Summit' statements (November 2009)

The World Food Summit (16-18 November 2009 – Rome) recognized the need to promote the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity for food and agriculture as one of the main recipes for confronting the many challenges facing the planet.

The following text shows some of the relevant statements delivered during the Summit. Among them, we highlight only those which clearly recognize the contribution that biodiversity can make to tackle the problems of food and nutrition insecurity and the contribution biodiversity can make to sustainable diets.

Declaration on the World Summit on Food Security

Climate change poses additional severe risks to food security and the agriculture sector. Its expected impact is particularly fraught with danger for smallholder farmers in developing countries, notably the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), and for already vulnerable populations. Any recipe for confronting the challenges of climate change must allow for mitigation options and a firm commitment to the adaptation of agriculture, including through conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources for food and agriculture.

We commit, considering diverse conditions in each country, to support increased production and productivity of agriculture, and to reduce pre- and post-harvest losses. We will implement sustainable practices, including responsible fisheries, improved resource use, protection of the environment, conservation of the natural resource base and enhanced use of ecosystem services. We will give special attention to crop and livestock systems, fisheries and aquaculture, and forest and tree resources, with a focus on smallholders. We will address access to, and sustainable use of, land and water; maintaining the health and productivity of all ecosystems; and better management of the biodiversity associated with food and agriculture. We note, as an example, the perilous state of Lake Chad and encourage all efforts to protect it. We will support the conservation of, access to, and fair and equitable sharing of, the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources, in accordance with national law and international agreements.

We recognize that increasing agricultural productivity is the main means to meet the increasing demand for food given the constraints on expanding land and water used for food production. We will seek to mobilize the resources needed to increase productivity, including the review, approval and adoption of biotechnology and other new technologies and innovations that are safe, effective and environmentally sustainable.

His Excellency José Manuel BARROSO, President of the European Commission

Bio-diversity is also an important part of the solution, and I think we have undervalued its contribution both in tackling climate change and food insecurity. It deserves much more high level attention. These three issues – food security, climate change, and biodiversity are deeply interwoven. We need to think through the policies which will enable us to tackle each of them successfully. These are important and difficult challenges, but I am determined to tackle them in the next mandate of the European Commission.

Statement by Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

Achievement of food security should not occur on cost of the environment. Next to food security, sustainability of food security should remain in the focus of the scientific and political attention. One of the strategic goals should be mitigation of the impact of the climate change and preservation of biodiversity and rural liveliness by following worldwide environmental standards and investing more

into new environmentally friendly ways of production and technologies that would, among other things, help optimize the excessive use of water in agriculture.

A long-term approach to food security problem must include a steady growth in knowledge and education of the farmers of developing countries that would enable them to fully utilize new technologies and methods in order to maximize the crop while not harming the environment.

His Excellency Recep Tayyip ERDOGAN, Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey

I wish to underline an important point regarding this issue. Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity is rather important since it is a global resource to produce new food stuff to feed the world's population, overcome food insufficiency, develop new species which are convenient for environment and climate change. Conservation of biodiversity as being an asset and wealth of the earth falls under responsibility of all countries. Turkey will continue to struggle and cooperate with other countries.

His Excellency Tigran SARGSYAN, Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia

The Republic of Armenia has become more vigilant towards the goal of ensuring adequate food quality and food safety over the last few years. In particular, the functions of state governing bodies in this domain are well defined. There has been tangible work done for the harmonization of national legislation to meet international standards for addressing the benefits of biodiversity for food and agriculture for enhancing the sustainable use of rich cultivars and species present in Armenia, for re-equipping laboratories, for building the capacity of human resources and the encouragement of public involvement, and for the betterment of accountability, participatory practices, and transparency, as well as improved surveillance and control.

Dr Hedwig Wögerbauer, Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management of the Republic of Austria

Given the severe threats posed by climate change to food security, we will need to ensure that all countries world-wide have access to the plant genetic resources for food and agriculture they will need to maintain agricultural biodiversity. Therefore, Austria strongly supports the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture as an instrument that helps us all to prepare for the predicted consequences of climate change. We are very much encouraged with the ongoing development of the Treaty's benefit-sharing fund that allows to maintain the in situ variety of resources.

Her Excellency (Ms) Gerda VERBURG, Minister for Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

At the same time, numerous reports indicate that we use far more of our natural resources than our planet can regenerate. Some reports even suggest as much as four times!

The competition for the use of natural resources – land, water and biodiversity – for the production of food, feed and bio-fuels is fiercer than ever.

Against this backdrop delegates from all over the world agreed in New York in May 2009 that a world facing multiple crises, including climate change and looming natural resource scarcity, urgently needs a transition towards a more sustainable and resource efficient agriculture.

The Honourable Mrigendra Kumar Singh YADAV, Minister for Agriculture and Cooperatives of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal

LDCs must also be provided with special support for capacity enhancement as well as institutional and human resources development. They must be enabled to take advantage of new technologies and

develop their own research capabilities so as to make efficient use and conserve their genetic resources, biodiversity and indigenous agricultural products and preferences.

Mr A.G. ASEFFA, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to FAO

Climate change is posing additional severe risks to food security and the agricultural sector, especially its expected impact is particularly filled with danger for smallholder farmers in Least Developed Countries, and for already poor and vulnerable groups. Any device for confronting the challenge of climate change must allow for mitigation options and a firm commitment to the adaptation of agriculture, including through conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources for food and agriculture.

Ms Cécile MOLINIER, Director, Office of the United Nations Development Programme Office, Geneva

Finally, and I am now turning back to the crucial interface between food security and ecological frameworks that allow food to be produced and harvested. Yes, we must pursue policies and incentives that can stimulate increased production and productivity. But we should ensure that these policies and incentives are not at odds or at war with productive ecosystems but rather aligned so that we stop ruining the water sources and the soils that all crops depend on, but that we rather replenish them. A fair and ambitious climate deal will be needed to stabilize temperature increases and avoid catastrophic damage, encourage less carbon-intensive production and consumption, and ensure climate financing to support inclusive economic growth and sustainable poverty reduction. Such a deal must not be at odds with putting in place the incentives for sustainable land management where both carbon and nutrients are plowed back into the soils, enhancing food production for the longer term. Coupled with other innovations, at both global and country levels, we can reverse desertification and land degradation and loss of biodiversity—all of which directly and indirectly threaten global food security today and in coming decades.

Mr Emile FRISON, Director-General of Bioversity International

Diversified agriculture brings other benefits too. It makes smallholder farming more sustainable. Efforts to increase production, which have been vitally important, have so far been based on simplified systems that depend on a few varieties of even fewer crops. They require massive injections of energy dependent inputs such as fertilisers and pesticides. These simplified systems are vulnerable to shocks and are intrinsically unsustainable.

We need to create resilient systems that do not overly depend on energy requiring inputs.

Another benefit. Not only are diversified farming systems more sustainable, they also reduce the vulnerability of poor farmers. They minimize the risk of catastrophic harvest failures caused by droughts or floods, by extremes of temperature and by outbreaks of pests and diseases, all of which will be exacerbated by climate change.

Most smallholder farmers seek to minimise risks, not to maximise productivity. Diverse farming systems help them to do so.

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, if we want to diminish the impact of future emergencies, we need to change our paradigm and invest in the agricultural research and development that will deliver intensification without simplification. We need locally adapted models based on agro-ecological principles and making full use of a wide range of crop and livestock diversity.

Private Sector Statement to World Summit on Food Security

While farm productivity improvements are essential, we would like to recall that it is important to think about the consumer as well as the farmer. Food supply chains in developing countries are very

inefficient. The lack of post harvest controls and poor post-harvest management, logistics and handling practices create huge wastages and higher costs in food chains. If one can improve operational efficiency, minimize logistics costs and reduce wastages, including through better storage and processing facilities, then a significant amount of food can be made available at affordable consumer prices. It is important as well to ensure the supply of nutritious, high quality and safe food because food security is not limited to adequate calories and protein alone – the target is food and nutritional security through well balanced diets even for the poorest consumers.

A key concern of most of our companies with respect to sustainability is the efficiency of resource use in agriculture. We are convinced of the need to make rapid progress towards knowledge intensive agriculture in order to ensure environmental sustainability. We believe that water use efficiency requires particular attention. Growing water scarcity and competition for water is not only a challenge for future expansion of food production, but it puts even the supply for present world population at risk. Steps to ensure the efficient use of water thereby can play a pivotal role in reducing food insecurity. Attention is also need to biodiversity, soil depletion and land availability and use.

Declaration from Social Movements/NGOs/CSOs Parallel Forum to the World Food Summit on Food Security. Rome (November 13-17, 2009)

Food sovereignty entails transforming the current food system to ensure that those who produce food have equitable access to, and control over, land water, seeds, fisheries and agricultural biodiversity. All people have a right and responsibility to participate in deciding how food is produced and distributed. Governments must respect, protect and fulfil the right to food as the right to adequate, available, accessible, culturally acceptable and nutritious food.

We commit to strengthen and promote our ecological model of food provision in the framework of food sovereignty that feeds all populations including those in marginal zones like small islands and coastal areas. Our practices, because they prioritise feeding people locally, minimise waste and losses of food and do not create the damage caused by industrial production systems. Peasant agriculture is resilient and can adapt to and mitigate climate change. We insist, however, that food and agriculture be kept out of carbon market. We will defend and develop our agricultural, fisheries and animal biodiversity in the face of the aggressive commodification of nature, food and knowledge that is being facilitated by the ‘new Green Revolutions’. We call for a global moratorium on GMO. Governments must protect and properly regulate domestic food markets. Our practices require supply management policies in order to secure availability of food and to guarantee decent wages and fair prices. We are ready to discuss new legal frameworks to support our practices.

**“L’Aquila” Joint Statement on Global Food Security - G8 meeting (July 2009)
L’Aquila Food Security Initiative (AFSI)**

There is an urgent need for decisive action to free humankind from hunger and poverty. Food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture must remain a priority issue on the political agenda, to be addressed through a cross-cutting and inclusive approach, involving all relevant stakeholders, at global, regional and national level. Effective food security actions must be coupled with adaptation and mitigation measures in relation to climate change, sustainable management of water, land, soil and other natural resources, including the protection of biodiversity.