

Statement delivered by
His Excellency Ryszard Bartosik, Secretary of State for Agriculture and Rural Development of
Poland
on the occasion of the 43rd Session of the FAO Conference (1-7 July 2023)
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Thank you Mr. Chairperson, Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to congratulate Mr. Director General, on his election for another term. We are all keen to see the FAO remain a strong, effective Organisation working for agriculture and food security. I wish Mr. Director General all success in carrying out this difficult mission.

I would also like to point out that Poland aligns itself with the positions of the European Union and its Member States.

Now I would like to address some of the issues related to water resources management.

Access to safe drinking water and sanitation is a part of the full implementation and exercise of human rights. This perspective must be taken into account in water resources management.

Poland is a country with low water resources which are variable in time and territorially. Our retention reservoirs have a small capacity. A non-uniform distribution of precipitation and the increasingly frequent extreme weather events generate periods of excessive and insufficient moisture content. This causes large losses in agriculture. At the same time, the significant development of industry and agriculture translates into growing water consumption needs. We want to tackle the phenomena of droughts and floods with the rational water management.

Such actions also contribute to the implementation of the ambitious goals of the European Green Deal, including the sectoral strategies, specifically, the Farm to Fork Strategy and the Biodiversity Strategy. The Green Deal is a multi-strand strategy the implementation of which contributes to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The environmental and climate goals are implemented by favourable agricultural practices, among others, through compliance with the standards of the Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions. The Common Agricultural Policy is implemented through the Strategic Plans of the individual EU Member States. The Polish Plan includes, a set of tools designed to encourage and support measures to increase water retention in rural areas. These tools include eco-schemes, agri-environment-climate measures and a set of measures related to afforestation and the implementation of agroforestry systems.

Investments in the area of inland fisheries and aquaculture are also implemented as part of the Common Fisheries Policy. .

We also support the development of scientific research and the transfer of research results from science to practice via the agricultural advisory system. Moreover, the participation of local communities in the improvement of water resources management is strengthened by the establishment of Local Water Partnerships. They constitute a mechanism for cooperation between local communities and institutions.

The Water Scarcity Prevention Programme has also been created in Poland. It provides, among others, for renaturalisation of rivers and ecosystems and improvement of water retention.

In conclusion, the actions carried out in Poland in the scope of national water management are included in delivery of the implementation of the following Goals: 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 14 (Life Below Water), 2 (Zero Hunger) and 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth).

Concluding, I would like to emphasize that the Russian aggression against Ukraine, including the destruction of critical water infrastructure, causes huge losses for agriculture and global food security.

This is also compelling evidence to the importance of the issues of integrated water management. In this context, we expect the further involvement of the FAO in these issues.

Thank you for your attention.