

G20 Agriculture Ministers' Declaration 2019

Preamble

- (1) Agriculture has developed along with civilization, from the ancient stone age to the modern era of science. Now we are venturing into the age of new challenges and opportunities for our food systems. Productivity needs to increase and distribution needs to be more efficient, including by reducing food loss and waste, in order to achieve food security and improve nutrition for the growing world population. This should be achieved in a way more compatible with the sustainable management of natural resources, and with “leaving no one behind,” as is expressed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Digitalization and innovation are opening up new opportunities in various stages of agro-food value chains (FVCs), which will contribute to solving many of the above challenges. However, in order to grasp these opportunities, the agro-food sector needs to attract new investment in physical and human capital.
- (2) We, the Agriculture Ministers of the G20, representing around 60% of the world’s agricultural land area, and accounting for about 80% of world trade in agricultural products in value, highlight our roles and responsibilities in enhancing sustainability of the agro-food sector. During the discussion today in Niigata, we confirmed, building on the outcomes in previous meetings, the importance of making the best use of our experiences and knowledge to offer solutions for existing and emerging challenges and to realize the full potential of the agro-food sector in achieving inclusive growth and sustainable development.

1. Need for innovation toward sustainability of the agro-food sector

- (3) We reaffirm that innovation and knowledge are critical for sustainable productivity growth in the agro-food sector. We acknowledge the efforts of public and private sector including farming community towards generating innovative solutions. At the same time, we reiterate the importance of their smooth and timely adoption by producers and stakeholders, including collaboration with non agro-food sectors, in order to maximize their full potential in raising productivity and sustainability of the agro-food sector.
- (4) We highlight the importance of encouraging innovation in agriculture, inter alia, through the utilization and access of advanced technologies, such as Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Artificial Intelligence (AI) and robotics among others, in our discussion in Niigata, as it can offer a solution for a wide range of issues. We note there is enormous potential in agriculture to gain from these technologies, including those already utilized in other sectors. While respecting applicable legal frameworks for data privacy we emphasize the need to set a foundation for access and use of data by all including those on production and markets as well as with an appropriate digital infrastructure, in order to enhance the potential of ICT and digital technology. In this

context, we strive to foster international cooperation. We note the discussion at the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture in January 2019, on the future direction, opportunities and challenges for utilization of digital technologies and the intent to consider establishing an international forum for further cooperation, recognizing that not all G20 members are party to these discussions. We also note the lessons learned through the G20-initiated analytical framework for improving agriculture productivity and sustainability.

- (5) We acknowledge that recent progress on technology and other forms of innovation including organizational and financial, make it necessary for farmers to acquire a wider range of knowledge and skills in order to enable them to embrace and responsibly utilize new technologies and innovations. We underline the need for an environment where farmers, including new and small scale farmers, regardless of age, gender or geographic location can have access to knowledge and skills. Recognizing that well trained people are one of the most important assets for the future, we encourage knowledge and inputs from non-agricultural sectors in human development and lifelong education for all.
 - (6) Women play an important role in the agro-food sector. We seek to overcome obstacles which prevent them from being equal contributors to and beneficiaries of FVCs. In particular, their empowerment through equitable access to innovation and skills training is important to the sustainable development and growth of the agro-food sector.
 - (7) We also underline the importance of innovation and skills training for attracting new entrants, especially youth, to the agro-food sector. We believe that skilled people, in turn, will contribute to further innovation in the agro-food sector if they acquire entrepreneurial skills, are more directly involved in the research and development process, and have improved access to the financial system and extension services. We reaffirm the importance of encouraging joint research and development processes through private-public-academia collaboration, nationally and internationally. We welcome the approaches such as Agroecosystem Living Labs that involve farmers, scientists and other interested partners in the co-design, monitoring and evaluation of agricultural practices and technologies on working landscapes.
- 2. Need for focusing on agro-food value chains toward inclusive and sustainable growth of the agro-food sector**
- (8) We emphasize the importance of local, regional and international FVCs in adding domestic value, noting that the larger share of farmers' income is typically derived from their domestic markets in most countries. The development of FVCs can help increase productivity and value for farmers and for the agro-food sector as a whole. We seek to develop our respective FVCs in an inclusive and equitable manner, to the mutual benefit of all participants including family farmers, smallholders, women and youth, by empowering them to make the most use of innovation and knowledge. In this regard, we

take note of the United Nations Decade of Family Farming.

- (9) The development of sustainable FVCs that increase efficiency and productivity, and in particular, that reduce food loss and waste, can contribute to the fight against food insecurity, increase natural resource efficiency and reduce greenhouse gases (GHG) emission. Along with our continuous efforts for alleviating hunger and malnutrition, we strive to take the leading role in the reduction of food loss and waste along FVCs. In particular, we encourage cooperation with civil society and private actors to prevent food loss and waste at the processing, retail and consumer level, and sharing practices and technology regarding the reduction of pre-and post-harvest losses with developing countries. In this regard, we welcome the work of the Technical Platform on the Measurement and Reduction of Food Loss and Waste. Furthermore, we support Japan's effort for hosting the Nutrition for Growth (N4G) Summit 2020 in Tokyo. We recognize that FVCs can also help revitalize rural areas along with other activities such as agro-tourism and promotion of local produce which contribute to increase product value added and income for farmers.
- (10) We recognize open, predictable and transparent trade is essential to the establishment and effective operation of FVCs. In this context, we welcome the 2018 discussion of Trade and Investment Ministers on key factors for G20 policy-making options to support the participation and increase value-addition in agro-food global value chains. We also welcome ongoing international efforts to improve trade rules affecting agriculture. Noting that measures inconsistent with international rules and obligations may undermine the efficient functioning of FVCs, we, G20 Agriculture Ministers, call on all countries to respect their obligations in this area. At the same time, we believe there is no one-size-fits-all strategy for development of FVCs. Countries' own farm structure, hard and soft infrastructure in production, processing and distribution, expected roles played by producer's organization and consumers' buying behavior need to be taken into account in order to achieve effective and sustainable growth of the agro-food sector.
- (11) We stress the importance of FVCs to be resilient in the event of increasing extreme weather, degradation of natural resources, outbreak of pests and diseases and excessive price volatility. We reaffirm the importance of comprehensive approaches to risk assessment, management and communication in FVCs, to strengthen the stakeholders' capacities to manage risks. At the same time, we underline that transparency in food markets can enable farmers to earn better incomes and help mitigate food price volatility. In this regard, we underscore the role of the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS), the Group on Earth Observations Global Agricultural Monitoring (GEOGLAM) and the Platform for Agricultural Risk Management (PARM).

3. Need for collaboration and knowledge exchange to address global issues

- (12) We are facing global challenges such as climate change, world hunger which is once again on the rise, and loss of biodiversity. We acknowledge that agriculture is vulnerable to these challenges, but can contribute to addressing them. As Ministers of Agriculture, we reaffirm our support for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as the global framework for sustainable development to advance progress towards more sustainable agro-food sectors. In particular, we intend to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. We will also work to maximize the role of agriculture in mitigating and adapting to climate change. The G20 Hamburg Action Plan or other relevant frameworks provide guidance in this respect.
- (13) We recognize that natural disasters and extreme weather events can often severely affect the agro-food sector and undermine its sustainability. Acknowledging the importance of the efforts so far to reduce, prepare for and manage these risks, we emphasize the need for an effective policy environment in which all stakeholders of the agro-food sector can choose optimal risk management measures. We recognize the important role that scientific assessment plays to inform policy setting, including those of climate change and adoption of innovative technologies, and welcome the work by the Meeting of G20 Agricultural Chief Scientists (MACS) that strengthens research collaboration for scaling up and out, and accelerating adoption of climate-smart technologies and practices for sustainable agriculture.
- (14) We recognize that ensuring animal and plant health is one of the key issues for a viable and sustainable agro-food sector, food safety and security, ecosystem functions and sustaining all life on Earth. We reaffirm the importance of enhancing information sharing and supporting activities of international organizations including the OIE and of implementing OIE standards, in particular, those that are relevant to tackling transboundary animal diseases such as African Swine Fever and Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza. We also welcome the adoption of the resolution in the United Nations General Assembly on the International Year of Plant Health, 2020, and welcome the activities of MACS that facilitate research collaboration to tackle transboundary plant pests such as fall armyworm. We aim to raise awareness of the importance of plant health to all, as stated in Annex 1.
- (15) We reiterate the importance of our continuous efforts to combat antimicrobial resistance (AMR) through balanced and multi-sectoral approaches. We underline the value of tackling this issue through “One Health” national action plans, including terrestrial and aquatic animals and agriculture throughout the food chain, and we reaffirm the commitments G20 made in 2017 and 2018 in that regard. We note on-going discussions in inter-sectorial or interdisciplinary fora such as Tripartite Plus (WHO, FAO, OIE and UNEP), Codex, IPPC, and other United Nations related bodies including the General

Assembly. We acknowledge the role of the agro-food sector in ensuring the “One Health” approach is effective on a global basis.

- (16) We highlight our role and responsibility in improving and promoting global food safety and nutrition for protecting the health of consumers. We reaffirm the importance of capacity-building for developing countries on food safety and nutrition and enhancing collaborative efforts in this area.
- (17) We consider that our continuing promotion of responsible agricultural investment plays an important role in improving sustainability of the agro-food sector. We support the implementation and the application of internationally accepted principles and good practices where appropriate, including Committee on World Food Security (CFS)-Voluntary Guidelines for the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security, CFS-Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems, OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains. We reaffirm our role in promoting these practices in line with our previous communiqués and leaders’ declarations.

4. Need for worldwide outreach and stocktaking exercise

- (18) We recognize the importance, in tackling the above-mentioned issues in the agro-food sector, of learning through exchange of good practices including those summarized in Annex 2. We expect that our work and the knowledge accumulated through this forum will be a good reference and contribute to all concerned stakeholders, within the G20 and beyond. We welcome the stocktaking exercise of the initiatives launched by G20 Agriculture Ministers, the outcome of which is presented as Annex 3. We call for all G20 members to continue to support these initiatives proactively, including through voluntary financial contributions, especially in those cases most in need, such as AMIS, as well as with timely and reliable information where so required, to ensure their continued work.

5. For our future collaboration

- (19) We reiterate that the challenges the agro-food sector is facing must be tackled more than ever by the collective action of all relevant players, locally, nationally and internationally. We encourage the collaboration of all stakeholders, including industry, civil society, academia, policymakers, and international organizations, as we aim for the future prosperity and sustainability of the agro-food sector. We, G20 Agriculture Ministers, confirm our intention to benefit from the opportunity of discussion this meeting provides and continue our collaboration into the next year under the Saudi Arabian presidency.