



G7 Niigata Agriculture Ministers' Meeting Declaration **-Open up a road to a new era with the world-**

We, the Ministers of Agriculture of the G7 members, gathered to discuss further strengthening global food security and nutrition from the perspective of policies for sustainable agriculture in Niigata, one of the main rice-producing areas with a rich rural landscape in Japan, on April 23 to 24, 2016.

We have successfully placed food security at the core of the global agenda, following the first G8 Agriculture Ministers' Meeting in 2009 in Italy.

We recognize that the agricultural sector plays an important role in ensuring global food security, particularly in an era of rapid urbanization. In Niigata we came together to address emerging challenges to our agricultural sectors, with the hope that the actions we undertake will benefit other countries facing similar challenges.

We identified three new challenges. First, the increasing average age of farmers in developed countries, combined with the lack of younger farmers entering the sector, poses a major challenge to future agricultural production. In areas where farmers are major sources of rural vitality, community-based activities such as maintenance of common-use irrigation systems, landscapes conservation, or preventive actions for disaster resilience are also at risk of deterioration. Second, increased demand for a safe, nutritious and varied food supply, driven by global population growth, rapid urbanization and diversification of dietary preferences puts stresses on our food supply capacity, and underlines the need for rural and urban cooperation. Third, extreme weather due to climate change is putting new pressures on natural resources and farming systems.

We need to take action on these issues, including the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change adopted in 2015. We should support farmers who face these economic, demographic, and environmental challenges of the new era. We should also promote and recognize the various roles of sustainable agriculture and rural areas, including conservation of biodiversity and characteristic landscapes for future generations as well as urban-rural linkages as identified at the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture Communique 2016. We believe that the G7 has a specific role to play so as to overcome these challenges through supporting both farming and non-farming activities and developing good practices and models. In this regard, we are committed to expanding farming opportunities and revitalizing rural communities, improving sustainable agricultural production/productivity and food supply capacity, and supporting the sustainability of agriculture, forestry and fisheries. In meeting these challenges and carrying out the actions we have decided, we will do so in a manner consistent with our international trade commitments.

I. Revitalizing Rural Areas and Increasing Farmers' Income

We are committed to expanding farming opportunities and revitalizing rural communities. We will enhance the robustness of agriculture, as well as maintain and strengthen adequate services and infrastructures in rural communities. We will, therefore, take actions as follows:

1. **Empowering Farmers:** Motivated, skilled and enterprising farmers are essential for the growth of the agricultural sector. We will help farmers enhance their capability and skills by promoting knowledge transfer on voluntary and mutually agreeable terms; applying this transferred knowledge on the ground and in vocational training; and by facilitating access to ICT, precision farming, and agricultural innovations. We will also encourage new and motivated entrants to the farming and the agri-food sector and identify business models that provide opportunities for new entrants.
2. **Increasing Opportunities for Women and Youth in the Agricultural Sector:** Gender equality and women empowerment as well as enhancing youth's participation in agriculture and food systems can transform rural areas and stimulate inclusive development. We promote and wish to strengthen women and youth's active involvement in farm ownership, farm management, marketing and other agricultural and agri-food related activities, as well as improving equal access to land and other assets so as to improve incomes and livelihoods. In support of these objectives and of the Sustainable Development

Goals targets on gender equality, we will hold an international forum for sharing information on relevant policy challenges and successes of policy measures which empower women and youth in the agriculture and food systems.

3. **Expansion of Farmers' Participation in Food Value Chains:** Establishing and promoting local, regional, and international linkages in food value chains (FVCs), as well as encouraging farmers to participate in FVCs that incorporate agri-food processing, distribution and service sectors, is expected to increase income in agriculture and rural areas. We will support farmers to maximize the value of their agricultural products, including through farmers' organizations and cooperatives, which can contribute to ensuring that FVCs' value-added is distributed to rural areas and farmers. We welcome works on FVCs and those related to international linkage conducted by Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) respectively, and call on Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) to conduct a survey to promote value addition to agri-food products.
4. **Global Responsible Investment and Trade for FVCs:** Responsible global agri-food investment is critically important for upgrading FVCs, in particular in developing countries. We share the view that it is important that farmers, food processors, and retailers should benefit from such investment. We will strive for better application of internationally recognized labor, social and environmental standards, principles and commitments in particular the globally-agreed Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (CFS-RAI). We welcome the recently adopted OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains and encourage our enterprises to observe it. We also welcome the New Alliance Analytical Framework for Responsible Land-Based Investments presented during the Leadership Council Meeting of the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition of June 2015. We acknowledged the importance of developing appropriate financial instruments for the capital needs of farmers and rural enterprises and of disseminating knowledge to improve the role of the farm sector in FVCs to strengthen the role of agriculture in the whole food chain. We recognize the joint responsibility of governments and business to foster sustainable FVCs and encourage best practices. We will hold a G7 Forum on Investment in the Agri-Food Sector to benchmark best-practices, exchange policy experiences on access to credit and facilitating responsible investments in agriculture and agribusiness, especially in developing countries, gathering all relevant stakeholders in an inclusive manner. Enabling the environment for job creation and inclusive growth in the agri-food sector of developing countries can alleviate the causes of rural exodus and irregular migration. Agri-food trade, through transparent and well-functioning markets and in line with the WTO commitments, also contributes to promoting FVCs globally and opening new opportunities for rural producers. In addition, trade can contribute to reducing food price volatility.
5. **Optimal and Sustainable Use of Assets in Rural Areas:** Increasing sustainable agricultural production and value addition in the agri-food sector cannot be achieved without secure access to and efficient use of assets in rural areas. Sustainable use of natural resources, such as land, soil and water, is an essential basis of high-performing agricultural activities. We value the landscapes and the unique food culture of rural communities. Recognizing the importance of rural regions and communities to our individual economies, we will promote diversification activities beyond primary production in rural areas that increase incomes of both farmers and non-farmers in rural areas. We will pursue policies for the efficient, sustainable and smart management and use of land, soil and water, ensuring legitimate and secure land tenure rights in line with the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries (VGGT).

II. **Improving Sustainable Agricultural Production/Productivity and Food Supply Capacity**

We are committed to improve agricultural production and productivity in a sustainable way in order to contribute to global food security and nutrition, responding to the increasingly diversified demands of global consumers and the challenges on the supply side such as the aging of farmers and climate change. We will, therefore, take actions as follows:

6. **Promoting R&D and Technologies:** Meeting future food needs while tackling sustainability challenges and improving people's quality of life requires strategies and investments in R&D, technologies, innovation, know-how, skills and their transfer on voluntary and mutually agreeable terms to farmers.

The international agricultural research agenda has to become increasingly interdisciplinary and practice oriented. New equipment adapted to the local context, as well as broadband and ICT and big data have the potential to help to expand food supply capacity. We will promote further R&D, including research for alternative protein sources in the feed chain, for example using unutilized biotic resource such as insects for feed in aquaculture, and will facilitate work under multilateral frameworks such as Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), Wheat Initiative and OECD Co-operative Research Programme on Biological Resource Management for Sustainable Agricultural Systems (CRP). We will also focus on human resource development for young researchers.

7. **Fight against Animal and Plant Diseases and Biological Threats:** Transboundary Animal Diseases (TADs) and pests may pose a serious threat to the global food supply and also to human health directly. We commit to the “One Health approach,” that emphasizes relationships between animal and human health to combat disease. We will also promote international cooperation to tackle the threat through World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), FAO and World Health Organization (WHO), including Codex Alimentarius, as well as International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). We reaffirm the G7’s commitments to assist countries to implement the WHO regulations (IHR) including through the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) and its common targets in 2014. We intend to advocate for emergency management of infectious disease and capacity building in SPS areas, especially in countries and regions with underdeveloped infrastructure. We also applaud activities that led to the eradication of rinderpest under the leadership of OIE and FAO supporting the ongoing post-eradication activities. We encourage OIE and FAO efforts to eradicate major diseases such as the PPR (Peste des Petits Ruminants). We welcome the initiative of Global Strategic Alliances for the Coordination of Research on the Major Infectious Diseases of Animals and Zoonoses (STAR-IDAZ).
8. **Combatting Antimicrobial Resistance:** Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) is a confirmed and very serious threat to global health, food production and the environment. We have decided to respond to AMR at global, regional, and national levels. We fully support the recently adopted WHO Global Action Plan on AMR. We will develop or review and effectively implement our national action plans and support other countries as they develop their own national action plans. We encourage efforts to ensure prudent use of antibiotics¹ in human and animal sectors and agriculture and therefore to phase out the use of antibiotics for growth promotion in animals in the absence of risk analysis and to strive to preserve the use of antibiotics only for therapeutic reasons in human and veterinary medicine. We encourage other countries to participate in relevant activities, in cooperation with OIE, FAO and WHO, including Codex, as well as OECD.
9. **Establishing a Cooperation Framework:** We decided to establish a cooperation framework for technical information sharing among veterinary authorities of G7 to accelerate the One Health approach to complement existing mechanisms, in order to tackle the global common challenges in public and animal health such as TADs, Biological-threats and AMR. We welcome Japan’s willingness to host the first session.
10. **Reducing Food Loss and Waste:** G20 Agricultural Ministers have highlighted the extent of food loss and waste as a global problem of enormous economic, environmental, and societal significance. We welcome the launch of the Technical Platform on the Measurement and Reduction of Food Losses and Waste which G20 invited FAO and The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) to develop. We encourage G7 members to use the platform to share value-added approaches to reduce food loss and waste. Food waste prevention strategies will help to meet the 2030 Agenda targets on sustainable consumption and production.
11. **Meeting Needs for Nutrition:** Malnutrition remains a key challenge and deserves our continuous efforts, in particular towards eliminating undernutrition. Education on food and nutrition plays an important role in tackling health problems including obesity and non-communicable diseases, which worsen quality of life and require increasing public expenditure in health. We recognize the United Nations Declaration of 2016 as the International Year of Pulses and the contributions pulses make to improve nutrition

¹ Noting differences in the G7 member definitions of the term antibiotics and referring here to those antibiotics with an impact on human health.

worldwide. We will foster policy on food and nutrition education, including education of nutrition improvement and food safety, in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders, including farmers and food industries. Aging populations and vulnerable groups have specific nutrient needs and access difficulties (such as swallowing disorders). Development of products to meet these nutritional needs can represent new market opportunities.

12. **Reliable Statistics and Data for Agricultural and Food Security Policy:** Monitoring our own food supply capacity and being conscious of the changing structure of global food demand and supply is a basis for a good agricultural policy. Reaffirming our support for Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS), we promote the development of reliable and comparable statistics across all countries. We recognize the importance of the Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition (GODAN) initiative, which makes agricultural and nutritional data available, accessible and useable by stakeholders globally.

III. Realizing Sustainable Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

We are committed to supporting the sustainability of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, and revitalizing rural communities, acknowledging their vulnerability to climate change as well as their positive externalities such as conservation of biodiversity. We are also committed to supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as well as the Paris Agreement. We will, therefore, take actions as follows:

13. **International Research Cooperation for Climate Change:** Outcome-based, wide-ranging research on climate change benefits the globe. We will support the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases (GRA) and recognize the importance of the Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture (GACSA) and other climate change/agriculture-related international platforms to increase research cooperation, share results, and facilitate effective knowledge and skills transfer on voluntary and mutually agreeable terms. We will share our knowledge and experience on carbon stock in forests and agricultural soils while recognizing the importance of the 4/1000 Initiative and the work of FAO's Global Soil Partnership. We will follow these initiatives which address climate change issues in a concerted manner, by means of organizing a G7 Follow-up side event during COP22. We promote the appropriate conservation and utilization of plant genetic resources, which contribute to the development of new varieties. In this respect, we recognize the significant role of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) and its Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-Sharing, as well as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Nagoya Protocol.
14. **Resilient Infrastructure, Land and Forests:** The scale and frequency of extreme weather events and natural disasters are increasing and they are becoming the "new normal". We will promote the development and rehabilitation of agricultural infrastructure, and managing land, soils, biodiversity, water and forests in order to strengthen resilience to climate change and natural disasters and maintain the agricultural production potential.
15. **Agriculture and Ecosystems:** All forms of agriculture, including climate-smart, organic and ecosystem-based agriculture, should be sustainable and, where possible, contribute to biodiversity and the health of global ecosystems. We are committed to sharing best practice and evaluation methodologies.
16. **Sustainable Forest Management and Eliminating Illegal Logging:** Sustainable forest management contributes to sustainable development by providing economic, social, and environmental benefits, such as sustainable livelihoods, provision of valuable, carbon neutral raw materials, climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity conservation, sustainable soil and land management, and watershed protection. We will continue to support integrated approaches to land use for sustainable forest management—including restoration, afforestation, and use of planted forests—to prevent deforestation, conserve and restore forest ecosystems and ecosystem services, including the conservation of forests and wetlands, and to promote secure forest tenure as well as training, capacity building and knowledge transfer in the field of sustainable forestry practices, especially for small producers, to improve efficiency. We are determined to take appropriate measures to improve forest governance, eliminate illegal logging and associated trade, and support the use of legally harvested and sustainably produced timber.

17. **Sustainable Fisheries Resources Management:** Sustainable use of marine fisheries resources and sustainable practices in aquaculture contribute to food security. Ministers, who are responsible for fisheries, promote appropriate stock management, through relevant regional fisheries management organizations and other international frameworks. They commit to efforts to ensure the implementation of measures and regulations aimed at preventing illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and encourage third countries and dedicated regional and international organizations to step up efforts. They welcome the support voiced by G7 Foreign Ministers in their 2015 Declaration on Maritime Security and the anti-IUU recommendations of the G7 High-level Meeting on Maritime Security 2015. They also welcome cooperation on preventing the expansion of fishing in existing fisheries, the development of new fisheries, and other activities that may affect resources or habitat, unless prior assessment of its impact on the long-term sustainability of aquatic resources and marine biodiversity is conducted. They support efforts to assist developing countries evaluate their own fishing practices to reduce negative impacts on marine ecosystems. They will promote measures that conserve species and critical habitats.

We, the Ministers of Agriculture of the G7 members, expect that these efforts will be implemented on a voluntary basis and in close cooperation with one another. We also call on international organizations, including FAO and OECD, as well as G20 members to advance these efforts.

We take note Japan's five-year-long efforts to recover from the Great East Japan Earthquake which occurred in 2011, applauding the support from all over the world for accelerating the reconstruction. We confirm that import restrictions should be consistent with WTO rules including the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement) based on scientific knowledge and evidence. We commit to respect these rules and that agreement. We hope that the reconstruction in the affected areas will be achieved at the earliest time possible.

Furthermore, we express our sincere solidarity to the people affected by the recently occurred devastating earthquakes in Kumamoto and Oita areas of Japan, as well as to all those who are suffering from natural disasters around the world.

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