

**CAN THO STATEMENT ON
Enhancing Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture in Response to Climate Change**

Preamble

We, the APEC Ministers and high-level representatives responsible for food security and agriculture, met in Cần Thơ, Việt Nam on 25 August 2017 under the chairmanship of Mr. Tran Hong Ha, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of Viet Nam, to discuss cooperation and solutions to enhance Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture in Response to Climate Change in the APEC region.

We welcome the participation of the representatives of Food and Agriculture Organization, Association of Southeast Asian Nations and World Economic Forum.

We underscore that food security is and will remain a critical issue for the international community in general and in the APEC region in particular, given that global food production must rise in volume by at least 60 percent by 2050 to feed the expected world's population of 9,15 billion people. We also highlight the significant role of APEC economies in today's agricultural value chain and the importance of trade.

We recognize the linkages between food security, poverty, climate change and sustainable development. Sustainable and resilient agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries contribute to advancing a number of the Sustainable Development Goals by enhancing food security, rural employment, poverty eradication, community empowerment, economic development, environmental protection and adaptation to climate change.

Under the overarching theme of "Creating New Dynamism, Fostering a Shared Future", and recognizing that climate change is one of the four major priorities of APEC 2017, we seek to address, through relevant APEC fora, including ATCWG, PPFS, OFWG and HLPDAB, the following key issues related to food security, through sustainable agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries:

Addressing the food security – climate change relationship

Increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events due to climate change are already negatively affecting agricultural production systems and food security. We endorse the APEC Multi-year Action Plan on Food Security and Climate Change to promote a more coordinated regional effort at addressing the closely linked challenges of food security, development, and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Sustainable natural resources management

We are conscious that the region's natural resources are under stress from overconsumption, land and marine habitat degradation, fresh water scarcity and loss of biodiversity. Greater concerted efforts, including regional coordination, to foster sustainable use and management of land, forests, water and marine resources, are essential to both food security and environmental protection.

We believe it is critical to strengthen policy and technical cooperation to improve sustainable use of natural resources while securing long-term food supply, including:

- Fostering relevant and coherent policies that promote climate-resilience, water and energy efficiency, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable growth;
- Encouraging investments in a range of integrated approaches at various scales that build synergies and manage trade-offs;
- Implementing innovative successful programs and best practices that promote the sustainable use of land, forest, water, aquatic resources through local, regional, sub-regional, and economy-wide programs and institutions, as a matter of priority;
- Addressing the sustainable management and protection of land and marine ecosystems for food security and livelihoods.
- Promoting activities that make the agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries sectors more resilient to climate-related risks such as droughts, flooding, salination and water quality deterioration; intensify cooperation to mitigate impacts of drought, flood, extreme events of El Niño-La Niña (ENSO), and climate change exacerbated disasters to address sustainable agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and food security; implement and scale up actions towards restoring degraded land, marine, coastal, lake and river ecosystems and addressing drought issues.
- Addressing the negative impacts of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing on fish stocks, the marine environment and food security.

Sustainable rural-urban development

We acknowledge that most agricultural production takes place in rural areas, where large proportions of poor and malnourished populations live. Accordingly, rural development, as well as rapid urbanization and the subsequent demographic and diet changes, have significant implications for food security and quality growth.

We underscore that sustainable rural-urban development includes minimizing the negative impacts of land-based activities on marine and coastal ecosystems, and the lack

of effective solid waste management infrastructure imposes great socio-economic and environmental costs.

We, therefore, encourage APEC member economies to further promote innovative, inclusive and resilient rural development, and economic growth. That includes empowering farmers, disadvantaged groups, such as women and indigenous populations, smallholders and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in agriculture, to secure livelihoods, reduce poverty and improve food security for farming and fishing communities. Meanwhile we promote sustainable urban development that links rural and urban areas creating food systems that meet the nutritional needs of all consumers, particularly smallholder farmers and the urban poor. The development of competitive agriculture and food value chains will help promote rural development by adding value to farmers' products and reducing food loss and waste.

We welcome the efforts made by APEC member economies to share best practices and experiences in promoting sustainable rural-urban development. We endorse the Action Plan on Rural-Urban Development to Strengthen Food Security and Quality Growth.

Facilitation of trade and investment in agriculture and regional food markets

As APEC members are among the world's largest food producers and traders, we recognize that trade and investment in food, agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries are crucial to food security in the APEC region and beyond. We underscore that it is vital for farmers to have access to domestic, regional and international markets. The profitability of agricultural producers is crucial for a successful agriculture sector and for food security. We, therefore, welcome further joint efforts in promoting trade facilitation, innovative technologies, food market access and integrity and supply chain connectivity so as to reduce costs of food trade and improve market transparency. We will strive to reduce non-tariff trade barriers to promote the efficient flow of agriculture and fisheries products. We note the ABAC study on non-tariff barriers in agriculture and food trade in APEC's work to address NTMs and will continue to consider how to work on this issue.

An enabling policy and regulatory environment is also needed to foster and facilitate investment in rural transport, connectivity, logistics, agro-industry clusters and other services to improve farming, food processing and the linkage of food markets, consistent with international obligations. The cooperation in this regard can cover, but not be limited to, the following activities:

- Advance the Lima Declaration on the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) and develop the multi-year work program to further enhance APEC economies ability to participate in high quality, comprehensive free trade agreement negotiations in the future.

- Engage private sector in a meaningful, comprehensive way that can help develop models that are integral to core business strategies and meet the regional food security challenge. These “win-win” partnerships are advancing the impact of sustainable development and will foster private sector-led growth in emerging markets, critical to reducing poverty, fighting hunger and improving nutrition.
- Support member economies' individual and collective efforts to (i) Develop science-based, transparent policy environments that enable open markets, private sector investment, and gender-equitable access to factors of production, products, and income; (ii) Promote effective institutions and services, such as rural extension and finance, to enable both women and men producers to acquire, protect, and use the assets they need to take advantage of emerging market and trade opportunities; (iii) Strengthen producer and other rural organizations to help them participate effectively in domestic, regional and global food value chains, reduce transaction costs, acquire productivity-enhancing technologies, and make use of information on domestic, regional, and international markets.
- Greater convergence among economies based on sound scientific principles, international standards, guidelines or recommendations, where they exist, would ultimately enhance food safety and provide for incremental improvement in public health while promoting a predictable, fair, transparent and open trading environment, consistent with members' rights and obligations under the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) and the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Agreements of the World Trade Organization

We acknowledge that agricultural biotechnologies can be used as tools to enhance agricultural productivity, raise farm income, protect the environment, strengthen food security and mitigate against the impact of climate change. We will work together toward the promotion of transparent, science-based and functioning regulatory systems that allow the development, application and safe trade of innovative agricultural biotechnologies for the benefit of APEC member economies. We encourage the management of regulatory differences through the development of transparent and science-based solutions to global challenges.

Food loss and Food waste management

We highlight that post-harvest food loss and waste remains a challenge that demands further actions, including infrastructure development as well as implementation of innovative technologies among APEC member economies. The collaboration and co-ordination of regional initiatives on food loss and waste reduction is essential.

We call on economies to continue to advance the implementation of the APEC Action Plan for Reducing Food Loss and Waste and value the progress of the APEC Food Losses Multi-Year Project. We encourage all member economies to strengthen public-private partnership on awareness raising, capacity building, and investment, and consider further collaboration on relevant APEC action plans.

Looking forward

We reiterate our commitment to achieving a sustainable APEC Food System by 2020 through the implementation of the APEC Food Security Roadmap Towards 2020 and past APEC Ministerial Declarations on food security.

We are encouraged by the outcomes of the Dialogue between Ministers and CEOs on the Responsible Use of Resources to Enhance Sustainable Food Production and Agri-business preceding our High Level Policy Dialogue. We emphasize the importance of engaging the private sector and other stakeholders in the development of the APEC Food System.

We welcome the successful convening and fruitful outcomes of the individual and joint meetings of the ATCWG, PPFS, OFWG and HLPDAB, as well as the series of food-security related workshops.

We will report the outcomes of the High level Policy Dialogue on Food security and Sustainable Agriculture in response to Climate change, including this Statement and the APEC Multi-year Action Plan on Food Security and Climate Change and the APEC Action Plan on Rural-Urban Development to Strengthen Food Security and Quality Growth to the APEC Ministerial Meeting and the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Da Nang this November.

We thank the Government of Viet Nam for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements for the 2017 APEC Food Security Week and the High Level Policy Dialogue in Cần Thơ city. We look forward to the next APEC Ministerial Meeting on Food Security to be hosted by Papua New Guinea in 2018.