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## - CHAIR'S COMMUNIQUÉ -

### **Regional Steps Forward for SDG2 Implementation**

In a world of plenty, one in nine people lack adequate food and nutrition to lead healthy and productive lives. The world today faces one of the biggest challenges of the 21st century: how to feed almost 10 billion people in 2050. Current and expected patterns of consumption and production will put more pressure on already scarce natural resources in the future. The effect of climate change represents an additional threat, already undermining agriculture and food systems in many regions, making it more difficult to achieve food security and nutrition goals and reduce poverty.

The agreed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement are at the top of the international agenda for the coming years, including the Zero Hunger Challenge achieving zero hunger by 2030. They provide a fresh opportunity to demonstrate global leadership, further strengthen and implement international food security policy. There is a need to foster innovative networks and partnerships, boost both private and public investments in the agro-food sector in an inclusive manner. This is in order to raise agricultural, aquaculture and rural productivity and incomes and to promote more productive, sustainable and inclusive food systems, critical to human dignity. To support this process, innovation has to be stimulated and knowledge transfer encouraged.

The conference has focused on the implementation of SDG2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. To achieve global food security and improved nutrition, there is a need for sustainable increases in agricultural productivity and at the same time, this calls for reducing food losses and food waste. Food systems need to be more resilient and able to adapt to climate change and contribute to healthy oceans and to the reduction and removal of greenhouse gas emissions, where possible.

The conference was built around a two-day experts' segment and a high level round table discussion providing specific fields for further action based on the current challenges and

constraints, as well as good practices. The conference also set a first step of action with a set of concrete Food Security Deals. These deals were concrete, cross-sectorial deals made by different configurations of stakeholders which committed themselves to action in new solutions to contribute to achieving SDG2. The deals seek to reinforce and prompt real actions.

'Let's start implementing SDG 2 and let's do it together' was the main message of the conference. It was stated that SDG2 does not stand independently, but is interconnected with all other SDGs. That's why the conference focused on the following themes:

**1) Climate Smart Agriculture**

SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

**2) Reducing Food Losses**

SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

**3) Food Safety**

SDG 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

**4) Sustainable Aquaculture**

SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

In line with SDG 17: *Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development*, the conference has put forward different partnerships with many Food Security Deals in order to accelerate the implementation of relevant agreements and actions as well as to strengthen the cooperation with private sector, knowledge institutes, NGO's and governments, multilateral and regional organizations. This will be a rolling agenda with orientations and input for events and conferences of all parties involved for the coming years. Working together is the key point of reference.

**1) Climate smart agriculture**

Climate-smart agriculture (CSA) is an approach that helps to guide actions needed to transform and reorient agricultural systems to effectively support development and ensure food security in a changing climate. CSA aims to tackle three main objectives: sustainably increasing agricultural productivity and incomes to ensure food security; adapting and building resilience to climate change; and reducing and/or removing greenhouse gas emissions, where possible.

Key action areas identified:

- Further develop a holistic integrated approach for CSA (cross-sectorial, landscape approach).
- Invest more in research and innovation.
- Further develop a food system approach along the value chain for CSA.
- Improve farmers' access to credits.
- Develop relevant climate data / information and climate services, including through digital technology.
- Improve early warning systems that will result in timely action.
- Improve the adoption of CSA practices and technologies.
- Improve coordination at all levels (global / regional / national / local), among diverse stakeholders (governments / farmers / research / CSOs / etc.), and across sectors (crop production / fishery and aquaculture / livestock) to improve coherence and avoid duplication of interventions (from communication to disasters risk management).
- Improve the use of ICT in developing and monitoring CSA.
- Better consider crop diversity, instead of focusing only on major crops.

## **2) Reducing Food Losses**

Currently around one third of the food produced is being lost or wasted. Reducing food loss and waste (FLW) can be a “triple win” opportunity: it increases income for farmers, companies, and saves money for households; wasting less means helping feed more; alleviates pressure on climate, water, land other resources.

Key action areas identified:

- Being aware of the food losses caused by different actors in the value chain is the starting point for improvements.
- Creating ownership of the losses is a challenge to address the issue.
- Technology and knowledge transfer, together with ICT solutions and entrepreneur skill development are important to the development of food loss/waste reduction.
- Creating and forecasting demand helps suppliers towards efficient supply along the food chain.
- Joining a collective or cooperative initiative and creating scale makes investments in the food value chain more attractive for farmers in order to make profit.
- Coordination between actors in the supply chain is key to reduce food loss along the food value chain. The region has to look at how to connect the players in the supply chain.
- To make the food value chain work from the producer through the wholesale market to the end market, every link in the chain has to be in place and work in synchronization.
- The region needs a food secure alliance to make food production more efficient and the use of land and resources less demanding for our climate.

## **3) Sustainable Aquaculture**

Due to the increasing population and economic growth, by 2030 fish consumption in Asia is estimated to surge by 30 percent. Aquaculture is seen as the only way to sustainably meet the increasing demand and provide an opportunity for smallholder producers to improve their livelihoods and overcome poverty. Amongst others, a regional initiative in Asia and the Pacific is supporting sustainable aquaculture development. It contributes to the sustainable growth of aquaculture in Asia, foreseen to increase 60 percent by 2030 by supporting multi-stakeholder partnerships to effectively address the key issues in producing more with less, while safeguarding the environment, providing an opportunity for livelihood improvement and providing improved nutritional outcomes for consumers.

Key action areas identified:

- Tension between economic growth and environmental protection.
- There is a need for sustained investment in technical innovation.
- Need to enhance national and regional policies to maximize the synergies between socio-economic developments and national resources and environmental impacts.
- Differentiate markets to stimulate innovation and sustainability.
- Stimulate innovation by linking innovators to knowledge and finance.
- Invest in aquaculture is considered to be risky for investors (to the contrary of agriculture).
- Foster capacity building in developing countries with potential for aquaculture.

#### **4) Food Safety**

Food safety is an element of food security. Food trade in the economies of many countries have direct relation with health, economic and political consequences that arise when the food safety system of a country fails. There are different challenges in establishing and strengthening the key components of a food control system to ensure safety along the whole food chain continuum, the relationship between international standards and related texts, as well as the enormous responsibility faced by ASEAN +6 countries.

Key actions areas identified:

- Responsibilities for food safety is at the producers for using the right methods of production, knowledge institutes to help inform the producers about the right methods and improve them, government to monitor and enforcement, consumers to be aware about safe food and to be educated about it.
- The introduction of new standards needs to be done more gradually, in order to make it more easy and feasible for producers (especially for smallholders) to comply to these new standards.
- The alignment within governments, linking and coordinating parts of government can be improved and will certainly help to take on food safety problems.
- The alignment of national, regional and international standards needs to be as high as possible to make it as harmonized as possible.
- Risk management approach helps the robustness of the food safety system in a country, however every country needs its own specific approach.
- A rapidly urbanizing population in ASEAN+6, causes pressure on food safety and management entities and their responsibilities towards consumers.
- Education on food safety and food production methods needs to be kept going as there is still a lot to improve in creating a food safe environment and preventing anxiety in the market afterwards.
- Information on production practice can eventually lead to lower production cost in the end. As examples: the shortening of the supply chain and the use of less fertilizers or chemicals will also lead to more healthy food for a better price.
- Data management improvement can fill the need for better evidence on risks, impacts and costs of food borne disease and the efficacy and cost benefit of interventions.
- Branding safe agricultural products can be important tool to create awareness about safe food and healthy products, but it has to be elaborated very thoroughly.
- Malleability to local context; cultural sensitivity > no one-size fits all, localized approaches while acknowledging that it is a transformation process, thus no end-goal in mind, but transformational process.
- Social Equity: food safety is a universal human right and should be all inclusive.

#### **5) Cross theme key actions**

Key actions identified:

- Information and communication in agriculture (precision agriculture) are key to tackle many challenges.
- Conflicting interests/tradeoffs will occur in every (sub)theme and are to be taken into account.
- Saline water issues are causing serious trouble, but also offer opportunities for new solutions in many (sub)themes in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Use competences in other fields to use in one's own field.
- Agricultural biodiversity from a nutrition perspective is of great importance.
- Interdisciplinary approaches, multi-dimensional issues, multiple lenses need to be used in order to achieve the SDG's, as they need to be reached all together.
- An interdisciplinary approach to make linkages for problem solutions.
- Another conference would be valuable...!

## 6) Completed Deals

The following deals have been made during the conference and are complete (photo moment and completed deals-form):

- Offer research RD4DD to MARD  
*Sigrid Wertheim-Heck, Mr. Tran Kim Long, MARD*
- Global action plan for agricultural diversification  
*CFF, AIRCA, GACSA*
- PSG testing in SRP standard in Vietnam  
*VECO, UTZ*
- Promote sustainable development of shrimp culture improvement protocol  
*Monterey Bay Seafood Watch, Asian Seafood Improvement Collaborative, Vietnamese Fisheries Society, Blue Apron, Cheesecake Factory, Stirling University*
- Intensify contacts between RIKILT and China food and drug administration  
*RIKILT and Netherlands Embassy in Beijing (Bureau of the Agricultural Counselor)*
- Seed production  
*ICAFIS, RIA, MFF (Myanmar)*
- Develop fisheries sector in Myanmar through research  
*World Fish, CCAFS, MFF*
- Black tiger broodstock implementation  
*ICAFIS, MFF*
- Partnership for information services for aquaculture farmers  
*APAARI, Fresh Studio, RIA1, CCAFS*
- Brainstorm about developing policy to help small farmers in Vietnam to reduce food loss  
*WRI, NAEC (MARD)*
- Global knowledge base for underutilized crops and food systems and dietary diversification  
*WB, CFF, WUR, DOK/Sri Lanka, DHAN Foundation India*
- CSA Extension Hub  
*ASEAN CRN, FAO*
- Develop an Asian Regional Post Harvest Network  
*Government of the Netherlands (Agricultural Counselors of Vietnam, Indonesia and India), WUR Food & Biobased Research, the Dutch Postharvest Network, VNFU (Vietnam Farmer's Union), Fresh Studio, Land Water Food Consult, Da Lat University, The Fruit Republic, PUM Netherlands Senior Experts, TKI Dinalog (Dutch Institute for Advanced Logistics), Fresh Academy (and affiliates), HAS University of Applied Science, EP Nuffic, AgriProFocus, NAFTA, Duoinlog.*
- Explore Dalat strawberry / horticulture supply chain  
*Lam Dong Government, Agricultural Department, LD province/Da Lat city, SME's Farmers, Da Lat University, HAS University, Fresh Studio, PUM senior experts, Rabobank Foundation*
- Improving resource-use efficiency in rice farming in Vietnam  
*WUR, Can Tho University, HAS University, CIRAD*
- Potato storage for realizing a longer period of domestic potato availability  
*Fresh Studio, Post-Harvest Network, Agrico, WUR, DLU (Da Lat University), Vietnamese farmers and braders*

- RAS for pangasius breeding in Vietnam  
*Pan Group, Fresh Studio*
- Urban farming Jakarta  
*East West Seeds, Rabobank Indonesia, Dutch Embassy Jakarta*
- Establishing RASA knowledge sharing / cooperation platform  
*IPSARD/NIARD, ASEAN – CRN, NACA, CIAT Climate Policy Hub*
- Sustainable shelfish value chain in VN  
*ICA Fish, Oxfam , SNV Vietnam*
- Consortium for financial support  
*AIC, MFF (Myanmar)*
- Improving chain quality dragon fruit  
*VNFU, Oxfam, Grow Asia, IPSARD, MARD, Land Water Food Consult*
- Improved agrochemical management via fostering PPP mechanism  
*Agrochemical TF (IDH, MARD, Croplife co-chair, Tea and spices companies, NAEC, agrochemical companies*
- Reference labs for nutrition  
*CFF, Rikilt (WUR), MARD*
- Making agriculture markets moving in Myanmar  
*VAST, Netherlands Embassy, Fresh Studio*
- WB to follow-up on pesticide standards  
*Department of Agriculture Sri Lanka, WUR, PPD VN, CIRAD Cambodia*
- Financial support for development of Seafood Stewardship Index  
*Index Initiative, Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs*
- Mapping of national and regional aquaculture regulation and standards  
*NACA, Index Initiative*
- Bio Based Economy – Intersectoral  
*DAW, IAE, SNV*
- An integrated approach on CSA scaling up itself from pilot to landscape and regional for food in the future  
*IAE, VAAS Vietnam, VAFIN, NIAP, CIAT, SNV, IRRI, DAN, WUR, MARD*
- Gender Responsive CSA  
*DAW, SNV, IAE, VAKIW, CCAFS, IPSARD*
- Working together to building agri-food network in Myanmar, improving market driven, multi stakeholder initiatives for farmer entrepreneurs  
*Grow Asia, Agri Pro Focus*
- Post-harvest intervention fruit and vegetables  
*Post Harvest Network, WUR, Fresh Studio, Netherlands and Vietnam, \$50k by the government of The Netherlands*
- Aquaculture Innovation Challenge Vietnam 2017  
*Vietnam, Netherlands, Solidaridad, Fresh Studio, de Heus, INVE Aquaculture, VINH HOAN, \$50k by the government of the Netherlands*
- Aquaculture Innovation Challenge Myanmar  
*AIC, MFF*

- Circular agro systems  
*Song Han Farm corporation, DAW Foundation*
- Investigate farmer financing for Vietnamese dairy farmers  
*FMO, Rabobank, Friesland Campina*
- Dairy Solutions Partnership Agreement  
*Mueller, Mavasol*
- Exploring linking SRI rice to market parties through SRP  
*SNV Vietnam, UTZ, SRP*
- GREEN Coffee  
*WB, ICCO, G4AW, MARD*
- Seafood Trade Intelligence Portal (STIP) - Malaysia  
*Willem van der Pijl en Elise te Kaat*

## 7) High level commitments

- Minister Cuong of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development Vietnam has become member Champions 12.3.
- Government of Lao and MARC Vietnam made a deal to research and to share knowledge about CSA.
- World Bank (and maybe in the future Grow Asia) support(s) Lao with the PPP taskforce, Vietnam has a lot of experience and Vietnam also helps to make it work because they have a lot of good practice.
- GACSA will be in touch with the Government of Lao about the Global Alliance of Climate Smart Agriculture and their platform.
- Grow Asia will invite the Government of Lao to join their Grow Asia Forum in Phnom Penh.
- Government of Vietnam will support the Government of Myanmar on Oyster and Tilapia aquaculture by sharing knowledge.
- Index Initiative and the Government of the Netherlands will develop a Seafood Stewardship Index with a contribution of €150.000.
- The Government of the Netherlands committed to fund two concrete follow-up projects of € 50k each for the aquaculture innovation competition and postharvest losses in Vietnam.
- The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development Vietnam and the Government of the Netherlands have signed a Letter of Intent NL-VN with support of World Bank and RIKILT (Wageningen University & Research) to further develop Food Safety systems in Vietnam.
- The Government of the Netherlands offers the Government of Cambodia to further discuss on coordination on cooperate and networking within existing bodies.
- Wageningen University & Research, HAS University of Applied Science and University of Agriculture Vietnam work on resource efficient agriculture to reduce inputs.
- The Agricultural counselor of the Netherlands in Thailand will further discuss the possibilities on sustainable agriculture development.
- Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between Vietnamese Corporation Alliance and Agriterra for developing and implementing a Vietnam Cooperative Master Program.
- International/regional training programs on Food Security Governance for middle level management between NACA and Wageningen University & Research will be investigated.
- Further discussion between Rabobank Foundation, World Bank and the Vietnamese Government about how to support small holder farmers to use available budget for sustainable agriculture.



## - The Way Forward -

The conference endorsed a partnership-based innovative action oriented approach. This initiative was an encouraging first step ready to give national and regional follow-up. It showed that sharing initiatives, experiences and expertise is encouraging for real action. The bottom-up approach realized maximized knowledge crossovers, the use of inspiring examples of regional actions that have already made this translation successfully and addressed current challenges. By creating bridges between challenges and ideas, the conference benefitted one and all.

The key collaborative outcomes, to accelerate the implementation of the SDG2 and actions as well as to strengthen the cooperation different stakeholders, like private sector, governments, NGO's and knowledge institutes, are inspiration for further collaboration and networking in the region. Since, the conference brought together different key action fields and challenges within the topics of sustainable aquaculture, the reduction of food losses, the importance of food safety and climate smart agriculture and others, it was showed that SDG2 implementation does not stand by itself, but has direct relation with other SDGs. With many good examples, good practices and show-cases, the integrated approach and increasing of cross-overs should be the inspiration and benefit for further processes and action.

During day two there were made several commitments and were pointed out further directions for action:

- The need to support an inclusive and multi-stakeholder approach to CSA development in Asia, building on existing regional networks, is raised and will be addressed in the near future.
- Further support to an Asian Blue Growth Innovation Institute, in line with the outcomes of the Second Global Action Summit on Blue Growth and Food Security in Grenada.
- It is important that in line with the framework of Strategic Partnerships Arrangements between the Netherlands and Vietnam, initiative is taken in the Mekong Delta implementing food systems, aquaculture, crop diversity, transforming crops and changing from rice to alternative crops.
- A call for more Champions 12.3 in the Region ASEAN+6.

- To develop a Asian regional post-harvest program, especially related to agrol-ogistics and storage, with the Agribusiness Alliance under the Champions 12.3.

The outcomes of this conference show concrete key actions, good practices for follow-up and a set of concrete Food Security Deals that facilitates/gives input to regional processes. To mention specifically:

During the first Senior Officials' Meeting four priorities have been proposed by Vietnam and all received unanimous support and agreement and during the APEC Policy on Food Security (PPFS) meeting multiple initiatives are proposed. As a next step the outcomes of this conference facilitate the continued dialogue on Food Security in de Asian region, by bringing this into the High-Level Policy Dialogue on Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture in Response to Climate Change, in Can Tho, Vietnam, 21-25 August 2017.

Other upcoming events:

- The ASEAN Regional Forum on Responsive Social Protection Policies on Food Security and Price Spikes, in Metro Manila, 07-08 May 2017.
- The Grow Asia Forum in Phnom Penh, 10 May 2017.
- Wageningen University & Research 100 year Anniversary conference on SDG's in 2018.

