



Council of the
European Union

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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Council

Subject: Agriculture Ministers' Conference 2023 in the context of the Global Forum
for Food and Agriculture (Berlin, 21 January 2023)
- Information from the German delegation

Delegations will find in Annex an information note from the German delegation on the above mentioned subject to be raised under "Any other business" at the meeting of the Council ("Agriculture and Fisheries") on 30 January 2023.

Agriculture Ministers' Conference 2023
in the context of the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (Berlin, 21 January 2023)

Information from the German delegation

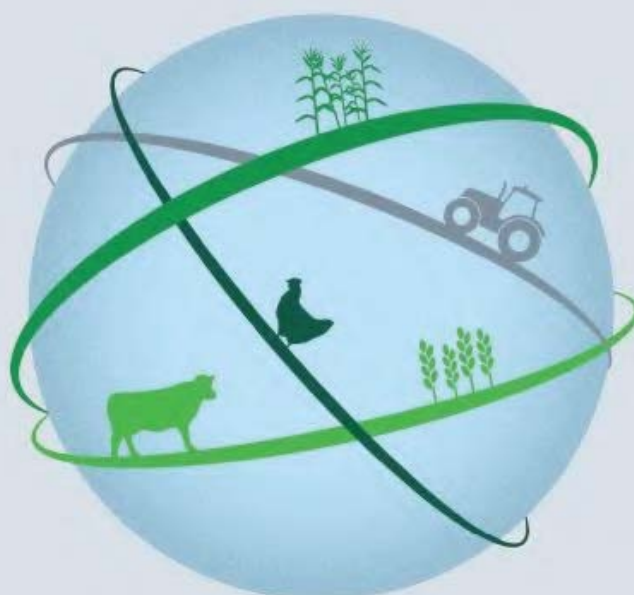
1. The Berlin World Food Conference - the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) – took place this year for the 15th time. Its political highlight is the Berlin Agriculture Ministers' Conference – the world's largest meeting of agriculture ministers. At the invitation of the Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture, agriculture ministers from all over the globe discussed key issues for the future of the global food and agricultural sector. The motto this year was: "Food Systems Transformation: A Worldwide Response to Multiple Crises."
2. In adopting the communiqué of the 15th Berlin Agriculture Ministers' Conference (see Annex), the participating ministers from 64 states have committed themselves to a sustainable and resilient transformation of food systems.
3. The Ministers unanimously confirmed the G20 wording on the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine and its impact on global food security.
4. In their final communiqué, the agriculture ministers reaffirm their firm will to strengthen the right to adequate food and to promote good governance and multilateral cooperation. They highlight that food and agriculture policy play an essential role in transforming food systems to make them more sustainable and resilient and that global goods must be protected. In adopting the final communiqué, the participating agriculture ministers have undertaken to actively support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.



15th Berlin Agriculture Ministers' Conference

Final Communiqué 2023

Food Systems Transformation: A Worldwide Response to Multiple Crises



bmel.de  

21 January 2023 – the English version is authentic

Global Forum for Food and Agriculture

2023 Final Communiqué

Food Systems Transformation: A Worldwide Response to Multiple Crises

1. We, the agriculture ministers of 64 nations, have assembled on 21 January 2023 for the 15th Berlin Agriculture Ministers' Conference on the occasion of the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) and have conducted intensive and productive discussions on the worldwide response to the current crises.
2. We are gravely concerned by the increased and ongoing conflicts in the world which are having severe consequences on food security and nutrition. We have witnessed the war in Ukraine further adversely impact the global economy. There was a discussion on the issue. We reiterated our national positions as expressed in other fora, including the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly, which, in Resolution No. ES-11/1 dated 2 March 2022, as adopted by majority vote (141 votes for, 5 against, 35 abstentions, 12 absent) deplores in the strongest terms the aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine and demands its complete and unconditional withdrawal from the territory of Ukraine. Most members strongly condemned the war in Ukraine and stressed it is causing immense human suffering and exacerbating existing fragilities in the global economy - constraining growth, increasing inflation, disrupting supply chains, heightening energy and food insecurity, and elevating financial stability risks.
3. We are alarmed about recent declines in global food security and nutrition. The situation had already been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and is leading to further disruption of global supply chains. This is contributing to increased prices and price volatility for food, commodities, fertiliser, and other agricultural inputs, also deepening inequality.
4. The repercussions from these shocks are occurring against the backdrop of the ongoing crises of climate change and biodiversity loss, which constitute a further threat to global food security and sustainable development. While unsustainable agriculture and food systems are themselves a driver of these crises, we acknowledge the particular vulnerability of all food systems to the impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss. At the same time, sustainable agriculture and food systems may also provide game-changing solutions to mitigate climate change and conserve biodiversity. A range of further interlinked factors is putting additional pressure on food systems, such as the degradation of land, water and

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ecosystems, including due to desertification, salinity intrusion, drought, floods, deforestation, water scarcity and pollution of air, soil and water, and the increasing threat of transboundary plant and animal pests and diseases. The consequences of many of these multiple crises are felt most strongly by the least developed countries, Small Island Developing States, fragile countries hosting refugees, and by women, youth and vulnerable and marginalised groups. Moreover, hunger and malnutrition are already most pronounced in regions that are severely affected by the climate crisis, in turn potentially aggravating all kinds of inequality, including gender inequality, as well as conflict and forced migration.

5. We underscore the importance of taking action to address the current food crisis to achieve SDG 2 through sustainable food systems. Also, we emphasise that it is vital to address all crises with equal intensity. As discussed during the UN Food Systems Summit, this should be done in a holistic and integrated way. These multiple crises require our collective dedication to urgently transform our food systems towards more resilience and sustainability. Having only seven years left to implement the 2030 Agenda, we will accelerate and intensify our common efforts. We commit to the following actions to progressively realise the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Call for action

Creating sustainable and resilient food systems

6. We commit to promote sustainable, inclusive, efficient and resilient **food systems** by enabling the agricultural and food sectors to produce sustainably, adapt to new conditions, enhance their ability to deal with risks, close the inequality gap, and recover quickly and better from crises. We recognise that this includes ensuring that agriculture is economically and socially viable and provides a decent income and decent working conditions for farmers, pastoralists, workers and rural communities. Particular attention needs to be given to smallholders, women, youth and people in vulnerable and marginalised groups, including Indigenous Peoples and refugees. We will engage with fellow ministers in our respective countries to ensure that food is available, accessible, affordable, safe and nutritious for all in order to realise the right to adequate food.

7. We will develop and implement **risk management** policies that foster greater resilience in food supply chains and enable all stakeholders to cope with more frequent and unpredictable events. We stress the importance of promoting diversification in production and consumption patterns as well as in trade for food and inputs. Thereby, we want to make the agricultural sector more resilient to external shocks, such as extreme weather phenomena, while at the same time minimising negative environmental impacts through the promotion of risk planning and management tools and systems. Concerned by the current worldwide fertiliser market disruption and volatility, we will strive to improve the production, availability and accessibility of fertilisers, as well as encouraging their sustainable

and efficient use in a non-trade distortive manner. We welcome the different ongoing initiatives on fertiliser, including the joint fertiliser mapping of WTO and FAO.

8. We underscore the need to reduce international food market volatility and tackle the uncertainty of commodity prices. In this context, we particularly emphasise the vital importance of the G20 **Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS)** as a tool for enhancing transparency in food and input markets and forming policy responses for food security and nutrition. We stress the need to strengthen and adequately finance AMIS to improve the monitoring and reporting of, and sharing of data on, the existing basic food commodities and expand coverage to related areas such as international fertiliser markets.

9. We stress the vital role of trade and well-functioning markets for food security and nutrition. We welcome the outcomes from the World Trade Organisation's 12th Ministerial Conference, which confirmed the importance of the multilateral **trade** system for agriculture, food and fisheries. We underscore the importance of the rule-based, open, fair, predictable, transparent, non-discriminatory, inclusive, equitable, and sustainable multilateral trading system for global food security. We commit to continue to work together constructively and take effective and non-distorting measures, consistent with WTO trade rules to facilitate and stabilise the smooth functioning of international markets to secure food supplies. We will continue to avoid any unjustified trade restrictive measures that lead to food and fertiliser price volatility in a manner inconsistent with relevant WTO provisions, in particular to mitigate the impact of food crises that hit most net food-importing developing countries and Least Developed Countries. We will also fight against speculative behaviour that endangers food security or access to nutritious food for vulnerable countries or populations.

10. We commit to work on making **food supply chains** sustainable, safe, inclusive and resilient, at local, regional and global levels, in accordance with the UN guiding principles on business and human rights. The role of the private sector in the food chain is of utmost importance. With regard to implementing sustainable practices along the food supply chain, the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition and the OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains can help businesses to improve on their sustainability outcomes. We will work on reducing food loss and waste in accordance with SDG 12.3.

11. We stress that **sustainable production systems** and sustainable agricultural productivity growth are important to secure the resilience of food systems, especially in view of food insecurity, the climate crisis, biodiversity loss, the growing world population and increased urbanisation. We stress the importance of promoting diverse locally and sustainably produced food to improve food security and nutrition, while at the same time recognising the important role of trade and taking into account local production and environmental conditions.

12. We commit to promote healthy, affordable **diets** and take into account responsible food production and consumption patterns, as envisaged in the SDGs.

13. We commit to promote and improve **research**, innovation, digitalisation of agriculture, vocational training and advice, including farmer-to-farmer exchanges, to sustainably increase agricultural productivity and assist in the establishment of sustainable and resilient food systems. We recognise that many sustainable solutions, including in the form of traditional and local knowledge, have already been developed and successfully implemented. We commit to foster better dissemination of these approaches. We underscore the importance of regular data and evidence in evaluating the sustainability of food systems.

14. We stress the importance of scaling up responsible **investment** in sustainable agricultural development and highlight the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems produced by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS-RAI). We commit to develop favourable conditions for the respective responsible investments.

Fostering climate-friendly food systems

15. We highlight the fundamental importance of climate change **adaptation, adaptation co-benefits and mitigation** in agriculture and food systems. We commit to continue to scale up and support action in the agricultural and land-use sectors to keep 1.5 °C within reach. We recall the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the Paris Agreement, and the conclusion and relevant outcomes of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP), in particular of COP27. We welcome the COP27 decision to establish the new Sharm el-Sheikh joint work on implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security, including implementation of the outcomes of the Koronivia joint work on agriculture and previous activities addressing issues related to agriculture. We look forward to continuing inclusive discussions on agriculture. We also recognise the importance of increased access to international resources, such as finance from public and private sources, capacity building and technology development and transfer to implement the outcomes. We will promote sustainable agriculture, in particular low-carbon agricultural practices, sustainable soil, nutrient and livestock management practices with the aim of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the agricultural sector, which will contribute to achieving long-term climate objectives.

16. As part of the climate crisis solution, we highlight activities for enhanced **carbon sequestration** in agriculture, including pastures. Under the right circumstances and with the right policy instruments, these activities can improve climate stewardship and biodiversity conservation and benefit farmers in many ways. We recognise the importance of soil health for resilience and sustainable increases in production and commit to identifying and promoting the adoption of techniques that increase soil organic matter.

17. We will promote **energy-efficient** agriculture and food systems. Reliable energy supply is essential for food security and development.

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Promoting the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity

18. We emphasise the urgent need to **halt and reverse biodiversity loss** and environmental degradation by 2030. Those of us who are parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity therefore reiterate the commitments we made under this convention and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. We support solutions by the public and private sectors to meet these commitments and accelerate action under the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030. We underline that the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity is critical to ensure long-term food security and nutrition and can contribute to emissions reduction and climate adaptation and resilience.

19. We commit to conserve and sustainably use **agricultural biodiversity**, including species, local and traditional breeds and varieties, crop wild relatives, animals and pollinators, and to promote soil health. We will strive to provide farmers and pastoralists with locally adapted, climate-resilient propagating material and animal breeds and sustainably managed landscapes for improved resilience and biodiversity conservation.

20. Conserving **genetic resources** for food and agriculture is a fundamental pillar of conserving biodiversity and crucial for ensuring the adaptive capabilities of crops and animals. We will promote the conservation and sustainable use of these resources and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their use. In this regard, we stress the great importance of the work carried out by the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the Global Crop Diversity Trust and the CGIAR centres.

21. We highlight the special role that **biodiversity-friendly practices**, such as sustainable intensification, agroecological and other innovative approaches, play for global biodiversity. In this context, we support the FAO Framework for Action on Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture and acknowledge the CFS Policy Recommendations on Agroecological and other Innovative Approaches. We also support the work of international organisations such as the FAO and the OECD for a better coordination and monitoring of the effects of the global efforts to conserve global biodiversity.

22. We commit to promote **integrated pest management** and to reduce the risks from pesticides by fostering the responsible use of pesticides and promoting alternative methods, such as mechanical and biological pest control, providing farmers with effective ways to produce.

23. We will increase farmers' knowledge and adoption of an integrated soil fertility management which strives to responsibly optimise nutrient use efficiency, close nutrient cycles and foster soil health. This can reduce input costs through the effective and sustainable use of mineral and organic **fertilisers** and through cropping practices such as catch crops. We commit to reduce overuse, increase efficiency and improve the environmental footprint in the use of all fertilisers.

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24. We will take measures to prevent and reduce **pollution** of soils and waterbodies deriving from agricultural plastics, inappropriate use of fertilisers and pesticides, and promote expertise of users, advisors and distributors in this regard. We underline the great potential of, and need for, agriculture, as the largest water user worldwide, to contribute to sustainable integrated water management, water quality and availability, also in view of decreased water available for agriculture. At the same time, we acknowledge that agriculture is highly dependent on clean and sufficient water in order to contribute to food security. We highlight the importance of protection of riverbanks to improve water quality and biodiversity.

25. We will strive to reverse the ongoing global trends in environmentally harmful **land use change**, in particular deforestation, desertification and land degradation, including soil and land sealing. We recall our aim and will step up our efforts to achieve a land degradation-neutral world by 2030 in accordance with SDG15. We commit to foster the sustainable management of forests and the protection, restoration, conservation and sustainable use of all terrestrial ecosystems in the context of Article 5 of the Paris Agreement. We stress that sustainable supply chains for agricultural commodities assist in achieving our goal of halting and reversing forest loss and land degradation, as they decouple agricultural production and consumption patterns from deforestation and forest degradation.

Improving collaboration for sustainable global food systems

26. We take note with appreciation of the ongoing processes initiated by the **UN Food Systems Summit** and the establishment of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub. We encourage the UN system and the ecosystem of support, including the Coalitions of Action, to prioritise, in coordination with the Hub, concrete support to countries for the implementation of their National Pathways or other transformation processes and the continuation of the National Dialogues. This should ensure a strong Summit follow-up process towards the 2023 stocktaking.

27. We greatly appreciate all efforts and initiatives that ensure the flow of agri-food inputs and goods to ease tension and prevent global food insecurity and hunger in developing countries, such as the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance (UNGCRG) led by the UN Secretary-General and the Türkiye-UN-brokered Black Sea Grain Initiative.

We acknowledge the Global Alliance for Food Security (GAFS) as a mechanism and coordination forum working closely with the UNGCRG in synergy with other international initiatives, such as the Food and Agricultural Resilience Mission (FARM) for the respective participants. Where possible, we will promote the use and continuous improvement of the GAFS Food and Nutrition Security Dashboard as an important **collaborative data** tool in coordination with all its partners, which is available for all stakeholders and gives timely and detailed information on the global food and nutrition security situation.

28. A strong and inclusive **multi-stakeholder approach** with an explicit role for local stakeholders is crucial for transforming food systems. We emphasise the need to establish and strengthen mechanisms to involve stakeholder groups in policy formulation to develop readily available, accessible and affordable solutions for everyone. This applies especially to family farmers, smallholders, women, youth and people in vulnerable and marginalised groups, including Indigenous Peoples and refugees. In this regard, we welcome the inclusive work in the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and its various sets of voluntary guidelines, policy recommendations and principles. We encourage the continued promotion of the uptake and implementation of CFS products in collaboration with all CFS members and stakeholders. We welcome CFS' efforts to enhance participation of stakeholders, including through digital means.

29. We highlight the importance of the **CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition (VGFSyN)** as an example of a global policy instrument that was negotiated multilaterally among governments and other stakeholders on the connections between food systems and nutrition. We encourage the continued promotion of the use of the VGFSyN at country level and the dissemination of guidance on policies and interventions to address hunger and malnutrition in all its forms through a holistic food systems approach. We support the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (CFS VGGT) and will support their implementation as we mark their 10th anniversary.

30. We commit to strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration in the transformation of food systems in line with the **One Health** approach. In this regard, we highlight the critical role of science-based international standard-setting organisations, such as the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH). We also strongly support the work of the Quadripartite (FAO, WHO, WOAH and UNEP) with their respective members and welcome its One Health Joint Plan of Action (OH JPA). In close cooperation, the Quadripartite sets the preconditions for food and nutrition security in areas such as food safety, antimicrobial resistance, zoonoses and sustainable agriculture. We particularly welcome the work of the One-Health High-Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP) established by the Quadripartite.

31. We will foster **collaboration** among national and international **research institutions** in agriculture and food systems, including public-private research and innovation partnerships. We welcome partnerships such as the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases in this regard.

32. We highlight that **policy coherence** is essential to bring about transformative change. We therefore commit to better align our various policy instruments, including multilateral cooperation, bilateral agreements and autonomous measures. We will thus continue to review our policies and support programmes for agriculture and to realign them as needed, especially those currently contributing to environmental harm or distorting trade, to better

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address interlinkages, synergies and trade-offs between the SDGs. Whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches need to play a crucial role in this regard. We need good governance, both within and beyond agriculture. We therefore call upon our fellow government ministers to actively support the transformation process.

33. At a time of unparalleled, multidimensional crises, we aim more than ever to cooperate closely to achieve the **SDGs**, which are our common goals, by 2030. We look forward to meeting again at the 2024 GFFA.

List of participants

1. Albania
2. Armenia
3. Australia
4. Bangladesh
5. Brazil
6. Bulgaria
7. Cabo Verde
8. Cambodia
9. Canada
10. Chile
11. Colombia
12. Congo
13. Cote d'Ivoire
14. Cuba
15. Cyprus
16. Czech Republic
17. Egypt
18. Ethiopia
19. Finland
20. France
21. Georgia
22. Germany
23. Guinea
24. Hungary
25. Iceland
26. Italy
27. Japan
28. Kenya
29. Laos
30. Latvia
31. Lebanon
32. Lithuania
33. Luxembourg
34. Madagascar
35. Malawi
36. Malta
37. Mauritania
38. Moldova
39. Mongolia
40. Montenegro
41. Morocco
42. Nigeria
43. North Macedonia
44. Norway
45. Paraguay
46. Poland
47. Romania
48. Rwanda
49. Sao Tome and Principe
50. Slovenia
51. Somalia
52. South Sudan
53. Spain
54. Sweden
55. Switzerland
56. Tajikistan
57. The Netherlands
58. Türkiye
59. Ukraine
60. United Arab Emirates
61. United Kingdom
62. Uzbekistan
63. Yemen
64. Zimbabwe