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'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
Subject:	COP28 Leaders Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems and Climate Action - <i>Authorisation to sign an NBI</i>

1. On 7 November 2023, the Commission submitted to the Council an information note¹ with the draft of the above-mentioned declaration, requesting the Council to authorise the Commission to sign the declaration on behalf of the EU, on 1 December 2023 during the first thematic segment of the World Climate Action Summit of COP28
2. On 14 November 2023, the Special Committee on Agriculture discussed the issue, with several delegations entering scrutiny reservations. Based on the discussion, the Presidency launched a written consultation, which expired on 16 November at midday without any objection being raised and with all reservations lifted.
3. In view of the above, the Permanent Representatives Committee is invited to confirm the agreement reached and to recommend that the Council approve, as an “A” item during its session on 20 November 2023, the authorisation for the Commission to sign, on behalf of the EU, the COP28 Declaration on ‘Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems and Climate Action’ set out in the annex to this note, while allowing for slight adjustments, in line with existing EU legislation and policies, to be agreed, as necessary, through EU coordination on-the-spot.

¹ 15221/23

**Emirates Declaration on
Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems,
and Climate Action**

We, Heads of State and Government:

Recognizing that unprecedented adverse climate impacts are increasingly threatening the resilience of agriculture and food systems as well as the ability of many, especially the most vulnerable, to produce and access food in the face of mounting hunger, malnutrition, and economic stresses;

Recognizing the profound potential of agriculture and food systems to drive powerful and innovative responses to climate change and to unlock shared prosperity for all;

Underscoring the need to progressively realize the right to adequate food in the context of national food security as well as the need to ensure access to safe, sufficient, affordable, and nutritious food for all;

Noting that agriculture and food systems are fundamental to the lives and livelihoods of billions of people, including smallholders, family farmers, fisherfolk and other producers and food workers;

Noting the essential role of international and multi-stakeholder cooperation, including South-South and Triangular cooperation, financial and funding institutions, trade, and non-state actors in responding to climate change;

Reaffirming our respective commitments, collective and individual, to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, and the Sharm El Sheikh Joint Work on implementation of climate action in agriculture and food security; as well as noting the UN Food Systems Summit;

Recalling also the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, acknowledging that they are the primary international, intergovernmental forums for negotiating the global response to climate change;

Recalling the findings of recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) assessments as well as noting the Synthesis report by the co-facilitators on the technical dialogue of the first global stocktake;

We stress that any path to fully achieving the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement must include agriculture and food systems.

We affirm that agriculture and food systems must urgently adapt and transform in order to respond to the imperatives of climate change.

We declare our intent to work collaboratively and expeditiously to pursue the following objectives:

1. Scaling-up adaptation and resilience activities and responses in order to reduce the vulnerability of all farmers, fisherfolk, and other food producers to the impacts of climate change, including through financial and technical support for solutions, capacity building, infrastructure, and innovations, including early warning systems, that promote sustainable food security, production and nutrition, while conserving, protecting and restoring nature.
2. Promoting food security and nutrition by increasing efforts to support vulnerable people through approaches such as social protection systems and safety nets, school feeding and public procurement programs, targeted research and innovation, and focusing on the specific needs of women, children and youth, Indigenous Peoples, smallholders, family farmers, local communities and persons with disabilities, among others;
3. Supporting workers in agriculture and food systems, including women and youth, whose livelihoods are threatened by climate change, to maintain inclusive, decent work, through context-appropriate approaches which could include increasing, adapting and diversifying incomes;

4. Strengthening the integrated management of water in agriculture and food systems at all levels to ensure sustainability and reduce adverse impacts on communities that depend on these inter-related areas;
5. Maximize the climate and environmental benefits – while containing and reducing harmful impacts – associated with agriculture and food systems by conserving, protecting and restoring land and natural ecosystems, enhancing soil health, and biodiversity, and shifting from higher greenhouse gas-emitting practices to more sustainable production and consumption approaches, including by reducing food loss and waste and promoting sustainable aquatic blue foods;

To achieve these aims – according to our own national circumstances – we commit to expedite the integration

of agriculture and food systems into our climate action and, simultaneously, to mainstream climate action across our policy agendas and actions related to agriculture and food systems.

In fulfilling this commitment, by 2025 we intend to strengthen our respective and shared efforts to:

1. Pursue broad, transparent, and inclusive engagement, as appropriate within our national contexts, to integrate agriculture and food systems into National Adaptation Plans, Nationally Determined Contributions, Long-term Strategies, National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, and other related strategies before the convening of COP30.
2. Revisit or orient policies and public support related to agriculture and food systems to promote activities which increase incomes, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and bolster resilience, productivity, livelihoods, nutrition, water efficiency and human, animal and ecosystem health while reducing food loss and waste, and ecosystem loss and degradation.

3. Continue to scale-up and enhance access to all forms of finance from the public, philanthropic and private sectors - including through blended instruments, public-private partnerships and other aligned efforts - to adapt and transform agriculture and food systems to respond to climate change.
4. Accelerate and scale science and evidence-based innovations – including local and indigenous knowledge – which increase sustainable productivity and production of agriculture and related emerging domains, promote ecosystem resilience and improve livelihoods, including for rural communities, smallholders, family farmers and other producers.
5. Strengthen the rules-based, non-discriminatory, open, fair, inclusive, equitable and transparent multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organization at its core.

With seven years remaining to achieve our shared goals, we intend to strengthen collaboration among our respective ministries – including agriculture, climate, energy, environment, finance, and health – and with diverse stakeholders to achieve the objectives and efforts articulated in this Declaration, and as appropriate within our national contexts.

To maintain momentum, we intend to benefit from relevant regional and global convenings in order to share experiences and to accelerate national and collaborative action. We will review our collective progress next year at COP29 with a view to considering next steps in 2025 and beyond.
