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#### 'I/A' ITEM NOTE

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Special Committee on Agriculture / Council
Subject:	Updated EU Guidelines for the G20 Agriculture Ministers' meeting (Cuiabá, Brazil, 11-13 September 2024) - Approval

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1. The Commission submitted the draft guidelines on 26 March 2024 (doc. 8308/24).
2. A silence consultation was launched on 16 April 2024 (doc. 8308/1/24 REV 1) on a slightly revised draft of the guidelines (with the removal of the reference to aquaculture and fisheries). On expiry of the deadline, no delegation had raised objections to the revised draft.
3. In light of the above, the Special Committee on Agriculture is invited to recommend that the Council endorse the guidelines as set out in Annex as an “A” item at one of its forthcoming meetings.

**Updated EU Guidelines for the G20 Agriculture Ministers' Meeting  
scheduled for 11 – 13 September 2024, Cuiabá, Brazil**

*This note sets out the priorities for the EU and its Member States and is intended only for internal use by EU & Member States delegations. Due to the unpredictable geopolitical schedule of a year marked by military conflicts and key elections, meeting details are indicative and subject to change.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

In 2024, Brazil holds the rotating G20 Presidency for the first time in its history and has scheduled an Agriculture Ministers' Meeting (AMM) for 11 – 13 September 2024 to be convened in Cuiabá (*tbc*).

At the first G20 Sherpa Meeting (11 - 15 December 2023), the Brazilian Presidency established the following priority areas for the G20 Agriculture work stream:

- 1) “Sustainability of agrifood systems in their multiply paths”;
- 2) “Enhancing international trade contribution to food and nutritional security”;
- 3) “Recognizing the essential role of family farmers, peasants, indigenous peoples and traditional communities for sustainable, healthy and inclusive food systems”;
- 4) “Promote the sustainable integration of fisheries and aquaculture into local and global value chains<sup>1</sup>”.

These priorities were confirmed in the Agriculture Issue Note circulated by the Brazilian Presidency following the First Sherpa Meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> These guidelines do not apply to this priority area.

At the AMM, Agriculture Ministers will discuss and possibly adopt (if so, by unanimity) the 2024 G20 communiqué on agriculture. The text of this communiqué will be elaborated through a lengthy negotiation procedure, comprising virtual drafting sessions as well as three main Agriculture Deputies' Meetings prior to the AMM, at present scheduled for 29 – 30 April (Brasília), 11 – 12 June (Recife) and 10 – 11 September 2024 (Cuiabá).

Due to the illegal Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 and its ongoing dramatic impact on global food security, the EU and the broader G7+ countries had found themselves in a situation where continuing “business as usual” at the G20 was not possible. Owing to Russia’s intransigence on addressing this, in 2022 and 2023 it was not possible to adopt a G20 Agriculture Ministers’ communiqué (due to lack of unanimity on the text). If a G20 Agriculture Ministers’ communiqué is to be adopted in 2024, it must either address the Russian aggression and its repercussions on agriculture, food security and nutrition in an adequate manner that is not a step down from the language established in the G20 Leaders’ Communiqués of 2022 and 2023, or an appropriate solution needs to be established for cross-cutting language covering all working groups at Sherpa/Foreign Ministers’ level prior to the AMM.

Thus, the primary aims of the EU and its Member States for the AMM are to

- condemn Russia’s ongoing aggression against Ukraine and the rules-based international order, seek for this to be reflected either in the Communiqué or referenced from Sherpa level, and ensure that the adverse **effects of military conflicts on global food security** are adequately addressed by G20 Agriculture Ministers;
- **support the Brazilian Presidency’s** conduct of a successful G20 agriculture work stream in the spirit of enhancing bilateral cooperation with the host, mindful of the ongoing long-term negotiations of a trade agreement with Mercosur;
- promote progress towards establishing **international consensus on agri-food policy** that is compatible with the EU’s Green Deal and Farm to Fork objectives;
- reinforce the **resilience of global food value chains** against systemic shocks, incl. those arising from climate change, land degradation, deforestation and biodiversity loss;

- maintain the G20's momentum in supporting the **transition to sustainable agricultural practices** and policies, as part of a global food systems approach;
- **prevent backsliding on past commitments**, particularly on Sustainable Development Goals and climate change, continued support for the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) and efforts to tackle food loss and waste, and antimicrobial resistance;
- ensure a degree of **consistency and possible synergies** with the G7 agriculture work stream under Italian presidency, where appropriate; and
- as regards agricultural and food trade issues, confirm Agriculture Ministers' commitment to the **rules-based multilateral trading system** and strengthening the link between environment, agriculture and trade, as a contribution to long-term global food security, in line with the EU Trade Strategy<sup>2</sup> outlined on 18 February 2021.

Considering the content of the draft Issue Note on Agriculture circulated by the Brazilian Presidency, previous EU Guidelines<sup>3</sup> remain broadly relevant and cover most areas of concern. Nonetheless, we provide the following consolidated synthesis, which should serve as the basis for the participation of the EU and its Member States in the negotiations on the final text of the Agriculture Ministers' Communiqué to be tabled by the Brazilian G20 Presidency.

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE EU AND ITS MEMBER STATES**

1. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent systemic shocks, reinforce the **recovery and resilience** of global agri-food supply chains in line with the ambitions of the EU's **Farm to Fork Strategy** and UN Agenda 2030.

<sup>2</sup> <https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=2243>

<sup>3</sup> "Updated EU Guidelines for the G20 Agriculture Ministers' meeting, 15–17 June 2023, Hyderabad, India" doc. 7352/23

2. Address the **repercussions of Russia's aggression** against Ukraine, both on **global food security** and the integrity of **international agri-food supply chains**, without regressing from the language established in the G20 Leaders' Declarations of 2022 and 2023. In this context, advocate to **avoid unjustified export bans** and restrictions on food products and call upon all countries to keep their agricultural markets open.
3. Reaffirm the political commitment of G20 agriculture ministers to demonstrating leadership for the implementation of the relevant **Sustainable Development Goals** of the UN Agenda 2030 (in particular the SDG 2: "End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture"), and express strong support for (and for signatories, commitment to) the COP21 **Paris Agreement** and subsequent declarations relevant to agriculture.
4. Prevent backsliding on **environmental and social commitments**, and advance adequate language in line with the Farm to Fork Strategy and in the spirit of the European Green Deal. In particular, preserve G20 commitment to sustainability in all its three dimensions (economic, social, environmental), and maintain appropriate focus on food loss & waste and the management of biodiversity and natural resources, as well as social aspects such as the inclusion of women and youth.
5. Support efforts for **responsible agricultural investments**, ensuring they are implemented in a way that is consistent with internationally adopted guidelines<sup>4</sup>, and promote the engagement of the private sector and other stakeholders to upgrading agricultural capacity in a sustainable manner, with a focus on family farming and smallholders. Continue to promote **research and innovation aiming at increased sustainability**, including information and communication technologies in agriculture.
6. In order to facilitate the transparency of agricultural markets, secure the continued operation and funding of relevant G20 initiatives, in particular the **Agricultural Market Information System**.

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<sup>4</sup> In particular the CFS-RAI and CFS-VGGT (*Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure*).

7. Insist on a strong emphasis on combating **Antimicrobial Resistance**, in line with the One Health approach and existing G20 commitments, while avoiding language that could predetermine general EU positions or ongoing negotiations.
8. Emphasize the importance of the **multilateral, rules-based system** for agri-food trade. In the interest of progressively aligning international standards with the EU's policy objectives, strive to mainstream the prioritisation of sustainability in agri-food trade policy, incl. through the promotion of supply chains free from deforestation, forced or undeclared labour, and other unsustainable practices.
9. Ensure **coherence** of narrative with the Environment, Trade and Development work streams and other G20 task forces with responsibilities that overlap with agriculture (in particular, the proposed Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty). Where appropriate, strengthen coherence with relevant work of **international organisations** and fora such as the G7, WTO, FAO, CFS and OECD, and encourage international co-operation for agri-food capacity building in developing regions. In this context, welcome and support the integration of the **African Union** as a supranational body joining the G20.
10. Encourage the **continuation of regular meetings of G20 agriculture ministers**, in order to preserve the format as a forum for dialogue and addressing policy issues that are global in scope and therefore benefit from multilateral solutions.