

10th Forum for the Future of Agriculture: Time for solutions

Press release

Brussels – Tuesday, March 28th, 2017: The 10th annual Forum for the Future of Agriculture (FFA2017), being held today in Brussels, called upon all stakeholders committed to sustainable agriculture and protection of the environment, to move beyond pledges and take action in order to implement the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Along with the COP21 Paris Climate Agreements, these two international agreements provide a clear roadmap for sustainability in the years ahead. However, implementation remains key.

For this reason, FFA2017 today (with more than 1,700 participants) extended a broad-based call to action to businesses, politicians, farmers and civil society. A call to focus on the practical issues of implementation; a call for leadership from all stakeholder groups, including a commitment to cooperation and collaboration, which will deliver comprehensive benefits throughout the value chain, from the farm to the dinner table.

As uncertainty increases over the impact of climate change, low prices for farmers and the severe decline in biodiversity, it is not time for 'business-as-usual'. Agriculture continues to play a vital role if we are to provide for future generations, and should undergo systemic changes if we are to achieve the SDGs. Our ambitious agenda and goals were driven by our speakers and participants at FFA2017, who indicatively noted:

"If we want to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, the time for solutions is now. There is no time and no need to wait for others to move. At the FFA, we aim to inspire the leadership and on the ground changes that are needed."

Janez Potočnik, Chair FFA2017, Chairman RISE Foundation.

"Shifting to sustainable food systems and agriculture to feed the world and deliver wider goals of development demands sustained and bold leadership from every sector."

*Kofi Annan, Founder and Chair of the Kofi Annan Foundation,
7th Secretary General of the United Nations (1997-2006), opening keynote address.*

"Current food systems are inherently wasteful, and increasingly challenged by rising demand and loss of soil productivity. Moving towards regenerative practices, underpinned by circular economy principles, would help create more value and rebuild natural capital."

*Dame Ellen MacArthur, Founder of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation,
afternoon keynote address.*

"By embedding the Good Growth Plan in our business, Syngenta is taking action that enables growers to produce crops as sustainably as possible, using the best technologies and practices available, and monitor the benefits to the environment and their bottom line. As part of the 'call to action' at this 10th FFA, we have committed ourselves to developing the Plan further to help growers better understand how can they can improve their water use and reduce carbon emissions".

*Erik Fyrwald, Chief Executive Officer,
Member of the Corporate Responsibility Committee, Syngenta and co-founder of the FFA.*

“Land managers play a vital role in helping Europe achieve food and environmental security. We will do more, but we need the whole food chain and the consumer on board; the challenge needs to be met by all of us acting together.”

Thierry de l’Escaille, Secretary-General of the European Landowners’ Organization and co-founder of the FFA.

The Forum for the Future of Agriculture holds as its key commitment that everybody must do their part and come together in order to bring about meaningful change and progress.

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About FFA

The Forum for the Future of Agriculture (FFA) is the premiere meeting place in Brussels to debate sustainable agriculture and environmental challenges - where agriculture and the environment meet. It is an annual public platform where all voices have an equal say, where luminaries from various leading international institutions, such as the European Commission, the European Council, the European Parliament, OECD, FAO, farmers, foresters, the food chain, NGOs, and businesses from every sector present their diverse views.

The annual conference of the Forum for the Future of Agriculture takes place every spring in Brussels since 2008 and is an initiative of the European Landowners' Organization (ELO) and Syngenta. The purpose of the FFA is to stimulate open discussion on the future of European and world agriculture and assess what should and what can be achieved, attaching equal weight to the challenges of food security and environmental security.

www.forumforagriculture.com

About ELO

The European Landowners' Organization (ELO), created in 1972, is a unique federation of national associations from the 28 EU Member States and beyond which represents the interests of landowners, land managers and rural entrepreneurs at the European political level. Independent and non-profit, the ELO is the only organization able to stand for all rural entrepreneurs. The ELO promotes a prosperous countryside through private property dynamism. Its Secretariat is based in Brussels.

More information is available at www.elo.org

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About Syngenta

Syngenta is a leading agriculture company helping to improve global food security by enabling millions of farmers to make better use of available resources. Through world class science and innovative crop solutions, our 28,000 people in over 90 countries are working to transform how crops are grown. We are committed to rescuing land from degradation, enhancing biodiversity and revitalizing rural communities.

To learn more visit www.syngenta.com and www.goodgrowthplan.com

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About RISE Foundation

The Rural Investment Support for Europe (RISE) Foundation is an independent foundation which strives to support a sustainable and internationally competitive rural economy across Europe, looking for ways to preserve the European countryside, its environment and biodiversity, and its cultural heritage and traditions. Chaired by Janez Potočnik, it deals with policy analysis and project financing.

Find studies and more information at www.risefoundation.eu

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