



Meeting the Food & Environmental Challenge Sustainable intensification of food production

Media Statement

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FFA 2013 urges political leaders to address imbalances in the global agri-food system

- **Enable Africa to feed itself**
- **Enhance innovation and sustainable intensification of food production**
- **Launch ambitious agriculture policy reforms**
- **Reduce food waste**
- **Tackle protectionism**

Bringing together high-level EU and international participants from farming, industry and policy-making, the 6th Forum for the Future of Agriculture (FFA) called on European and World leaders to seriously **address the imbalances in the global food and agriculture system** and provide solutions to the following key challenges:

Africa: Delegates were in agreement that the continent has great potential in agriculture. To effectively tackle malnutrition and poverty the only realistic solution for the continent to sustainably increase its production is indigenous growth, coupled with more foreign investments and the genuine political will to improve the lives of African citizens. To increase local food security smallholder farmers need access to modern inputs, infrastructure and markets; they need advice to enhance both productivity and sustainability; and they need pricing policies to motivate, in particular subsistence farmers, to produce for the market.

Innovation and sustainable intensification: converting additional lands for agricultural use is not an option. The way forward is to increase production on the available land while preserving ecosystems and biodiversity, and using fewer resources by applying state-of-the-art science and innovation. To enhance biodiversity on and around the farm, land managers and farmers need tractable and practical solutions which are easy to adopt. The Forum demanded new forms of public private partnerships to strengthen research and extension services.

Ambitious agricultural policy reform: farmers and land managers need access to the best technologies and innovation to be sustainable, productive and competitive. The

Forum agreed that these reforms must support innovation with clear regulations – a vital condition for the transition to a more sustainable agriculture in the world. In addition, financial resources are necessary to provide public goods for which there is no current market.

The Forum also questioned whether the “greening” provisions of the CAP reform were strong enough to meet their sustainability objective. The conference called on European leaders to strengthen the CAP reform ambition and to provide the necessary means for a sustainable European agricultural and food sector. The reformed CAP must stimulate innovation by strengthening research and development, and education and extension services.

Reduce food waste: participants called on to provide better regulation and greater incentives to reduce food waste throughout the food chain and get serious about providing nutritious food and quality information to its citizens. Also retailers and citizens needed to seriously rethink their attitudes and behaviours towards food waste.

Free trade: the Forum called for an aggressive approach to tackle protectionism world-wide, focusing on where the biggest gains are to be made, namely in existing non trade barriers.

Multiannual Financial Framework: participants expressed worries about the conclusions of the last European Council, which treated the EU budget more as an accounting exercise than as an instrument to implement EU objectives such as economic growth and employment.

Food and feed scandals: in view of the recent developments around the illegal and non transparent use of horse meat in food products, the violations in the egg production sector or the appearance of aflatoxin in feeding stuffs across Europe the Forum agreed that full transparency, traceability and quality must continue to be the drivers for the EU food chain.

Better price transferability for EU farmers: improving the collective bargaining power of farmers and producers through cooperation and shorter supply chains would help weaker actors get a better price for their products and allow European agricultural products to be more competitive on global markets.

In his opening address, the Chairman of FFA2013, Franz FISCHLER, said: *“We have dedicated this year’s conference to the in vogue concept and objective of sustainable intensification, which is on everyone’s lips, but is not so easy to pin down in practice. Everybody knows that the current agricultural system is unsustainable – food demand cannot be met over time without innovation providing higher yields per hectare with greater resource efficiency, notably resource re-use such as nutrient recycling. Similarly, better management is of the essence for better economic and ecological performance on the ground. Our knowledge of the challenges and solutions is improving all the time but practise and implementation often falls short of intent, as the on-going negotiations of the current CAP reform have shown. We need a policy framework to match the stated*

ambitions and provide the means needed to increase the sustainability of our agriculture. I hope our discussions today will highlight this need.”

Robert ZOELLICK stated: *“I think farming, agribusiness, and related topics such as nutrition are going through a huge shift. This huge structural shift – a big ongoing increase in the demand for nutritious food, combined with contractions of the traditional means of expanding production – points to the policy imperative: The vital need to increase productivity. Yet the big opportunities – and needs – now are in developing economies.”*

John ATKIN, Chief Operating Officer at Syngenta, commented: *“Over €360 billion will be spent on the new CAP but it has to be more than farm subsidies if it is going to lead to the sustainable intensification of agriculture and provide value for Europe’s taxpayer. A key test of its viability will be whether it becomes part of a legislative framework which supports innovation in agriculture. The EU’s track record on this is poor: an increasingly conservative approach is resulting in unnecessary restrictions on some technologies needed by farmers to be productive, competitive, and sustainable in the global market. The new CAP must also incentivize farmers to adopt solutions such as the pollen rich flowering field margins of Operation Pollinator which provide habitat and nutrition that are essential to the survival of bees.”*

Thierry de l’ESCAILLE, Secretary General, the European Landowners’ Organization (ELO), concluded: *“Sustainable intensification is where industry, farmers, consumers and environmental concerns come together: producing more from the same hectare without eroding our natural resources. We should use the best agricultural land for farming and the best environmental land to protect biodiversity. Production and protection need to coexist.”*

About FFA

The annual Forum is an initiative of the European Landowners’ Organization (ELO) and Syngenta. It brings together a diverse range of stakeholders to catalyze thinking on the way European agriculture needs to respond to the major challenges that it faces in delivering food and environmental security. The Forum was created in 2008 in response to a belief that many EU policies impacting on agriculture are focused on solving yesterday’s problems, such as overproduction, and do not deal with the new challenges and market opportunities. Challenges include feeding a growing world population, demand for a higher quality diet, increased demand for renewable sources of energy and changing weather patterns. With limited arable land available, there is a need to sustainably maximize production from that already under cultivation.

www.forumforagriculture.com

About ELO

The European Landowners’ Organization (ELO), created in 1972, is a unique federation of national associations from the 27 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 making, ELO is the only organization able to stand for all rural entrepreneurs. ELO aims at promoting a prosperous countryside through the dynamism of private landowners. Its Secretariat is based in Brussels.

www.elo.org



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About Syngenta

Syngenta is one of the world's leading companies with more than 27,000 employees in over 90 countries dedicated to our purpose: Bringing plant potential to life. Through world-class science, global reach and commitment to our customers we help to increase crop productivity, protect the environment and improve health and quality of life.

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About RISE

The Rural Investment Support for Europe (RISE) Foundation is the only pan-European foundation devoted to the conservation and development of the rural world. Chaired by Franz Fischler, it deals with policy analysis and project financing.

www.risefoundation.eu

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