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FFA2021

Regional Event in Portugal





Session 2: António GONCALVES FERREIRA, João RUI FERREIRA, Mark TITTERINGTON, Emily REES, Bruno BOBONE, Cristina NOBRE SOARES

FFA2021 Regional Event in Portugal



FFA2021 went on the road for its first hybrid regional event in Santarém to discuss Food System Renewal

FFA2021 Secretariat

In partnership with:



The Forum for the Future of Agriculture went on the road for its first hybrid event this year, enabling the audience to follow it online or attend in person while adhering to social distancing rules. Organised under the auspices of the Portuguese Presidency of the European Council, the entire day was hosted by Cristina NOBRE SOARES, Science Communicator and Mark TITTERINGTON, FFA2021 Senior Adviser, Strategy & Partnerships. Hundreds of online viewers were able to actively participate in the debate through the Forum's unique digital venue. The FFA2021 digital venue, which remained open for the week, featured various rooms for digital attendees to explore including a kitchen with sustainable recipes, a lounge to network with other attendees and a virtual exhibition area with stands to access exclusive content from.

Discussing Food System Renewal

The debate was opened by Janez POTOČNIK, FFA2021 Chairman, who made clear that at the root of these seemingly very different issues chosen to be discussed that day was the same monstrous

problem facing humanity: the climate change emergency. He underlined: *"This means that we must engage simultaneously on two tracks of immense importance; readying our food systems and societies for greater disasters to come and doing all we can to find a different direction. The compass that has led us to this point is broken and we desperately need a new direction. (...) It is high time that global and local communities live up to the promises they have made about sustainability. Whether it is about access to water, international trade agreements, or climate change. There is still some time left if we want to avoid the worst and remain under two degrees warming"*. He concluded his address by emphasizing that we should *"therefore begin today by fixing problems that we are well aware of, and in many cases know very well how to fix. The collective effort we have shown in the face of the global pandemic in the last two years shows us how much we can achieve together – if we only choose to do it."*

What followed was an exceptional line up of speakers discussing two topics of critical importance not just for Portugal, but for the global community. The first

panel focused on farming practices and sustainable management of farmland and water use. Thierry de l'ESCAILLE, ELO Secretary General, reiterated how providing farmers with the right tools and methodologies while rewarding them fairly for their work should be the priority for improving their land management practices to protect farmland habitats. He went on to highlight the importance of healthy soils for healthy habitats referencing the works of French poet, Jean de LA FONTAINE, who wrote poetry about soil as early as the 17th century. All panelists then shared the best farmland management and water use practices in which were involved their respective organizations: WWF Portugal, Espirituosos España and Confederacao Dos Agricultores De Portugal.

The second panel focused on increasing sustainability standards in global trade deals. The panelists debated on how to increase sustainability standards in European and global trade deals, the responsibilities of the public and private sector when it comes to enforcement of any sustainability chapters, and how to prevent dumping and outsourcing of environmental and climate consequences. Those



Garlich von ESSEN, Paula CRUZ DE CARVALHO, Alexandre QUINTANILHA, José PEREIRA PALHA, Cristina NOBRE SOARES

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issues were particularly relevant as the EU attempts to ratify the Mercosur trade agreement. The representatives of the Portuguese Chamber of Commerce, CEL-CAA, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), European Centre for International Economy and C.E.Liège touched upon such issues as how we should expect the growing visibility of climate change to influence EU trade policy and how can commitments made under the UN Sustainable Development Goals best be included in international trade agreements, and what level of enforcement mechanism are necessary. Emily REESE (ECIE) delivered a unique analogy by comparing trade deals to weddings stating that the trade deals, much like weddings, are the starting point of new relationship reinforcing the idea that much of the commitment lies ahead for trading blocs when agreeing to a trade deal.

Sustainable tools to face climate change

A solution workshop dedicated to new genomic techniques (NGTs) took place in the afternoon. A first-rate line up of speakers met in person and virtually to exchange on two important topics: are NGTs one of the tools for achieving the Farm to

Fork Strategy targets?; and the impact of NGTs on Europe's agriculture, trade and development policies.

The speakers of the first panel were asked to discuss the potential upsides that NGTs could bring to European agriculture, specifically where it concerns the EU's long-term aims of agricultural and climate sustainability as embodied in the Farm to Fork Strategy as well as the Green Deal. How could those tools be placed in the hands of farmers and what advantages can (and should) be demonstrated in the field, particularly where it concerns the specific challenges of Southern European agriculture, reduced water access, increased temperatures, soil erosion, desertification and more? The keynote speech was delivered by prof. Andreas WEBER, EU-SAGE, having as respondents WWF Portugal, Iplan-protect, an agronomist from Valuaro company and a member of the European Parliament.

The second panel looked at the important aspects beyond the Farm to Fork or Biodiversity Strategies to tackle with such policies like the EU-Africa strategy or non-discriminatory and multilateral trade agreements (WTO), which may all be impacted if indeed Europe decides to move in a differ-

ent direction than the rest of the world in its approach towards the NGTs. These and many other issues were discussed by the representatives of the Portuguese Ministry of Agriculture, Euroseeds, National Association of Cereal Producers and a member of the Portuguese Parliament.

The afternoon session was concluded by the representative of the Instituto Gulbenkian Ciencia and ANSEME.

For more information on the speakers and to watch the replay:
www.forumforagriculture.com

We would like to thank all FFA2021 supportive partners, founding, strategic and local, who made FFA2021 Regional Portugal a reality! Special thanks to Portuguese ELO members: Associação Nacional dos Proprietários Rurais (ANPC), Confederação Dos Agricultores De Portugal (CAP), União da Floresta Mediterrânica (UNAC) and C.E. Liege; as well as Agroportal, ANSEME, ApexBrasil, CIB, Consulai, Euroseeds, and Travel Tomorrow.