



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK
FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND BIOSECURITY**

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GOVERNEMENT DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE DE VANUATU

**MINISTÈRE DE L'AGRICULTURE, DE L'ÉLEVAGE,
DE LA SYLVICULTURE, DES PÊCHES ET DE LA BIOSÉCURITÉ**

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HONOURABLE MINISTER'S OFFICE

FAO MINISTERS MEETING OPENING STATEMENT

HONOURABLE MINISTER WILLIE DANIEL KALO

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to extend to you all a very warm greeting on behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of Vanuatu.

Mr. Chairman, the world we live today is full of unpredicted challenges and opportunities. What we consider normal no longer makes sense amid the complexities of COVID-19 compounded with increased occurrences of natural disasters and other climate change associated disasters. These challenges impact and change the existence of our societies and communities, and forces to reconsider our development aspirations and priorities.

For Small Island States like Vanuatu, the challenges compel us to come up with innovative ways to be resilient in a way that allows us to proactively address the impacts and to convert the challenges into opportunities that will positively drive social and economic developments specific to our aspirations.

In order to proactively address our food and livelihood needs, profound changes must be applied to our food system. As our population increases, our land space for cultivation of agriculture, livestock, forestry, and fisheries products to feed our people, will get smaller. Food security demand by our increasing population will outstrip the ability of several of our rural communities to supply food. The need to strengthen our food systems to maintain our food supply is eminent for the sustainability of our societies. We must look beyond the challenges we see and face today and develop innovative alternative

measures to increase food production to meet anticipated food supply shortfalls of tomorrow.

In addressing this issue, the Government of the Republic of Vanuatu recognizes the important contribution of productive sectors and places a high priority on developing the productive sectors including food systems. At this critical time, the government of the Republic of Vanuatu will continue to look to FAO for technical support and funding assistance. In this regard, the Government of Vanuatu expresses its appreciation to FAO for the financial support towards the 2022 National Agriculture Census. The data collected will provide benchmark needed for policy decisions to be made.

We must demonstrate proactiveness in tackling our agri-food systems challenges through climate-smart approaches, technologies and practices using science and innovation – including indigenous and local knowledge as the basis. The FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 recognizes that innovation across agri-food systems is key to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As such, FAO is also uniquely placed to support its Members in strengthening national policy frameworks for enhanced science and innovation, and identifying research priorities and communicating them to the major research institutions.

We must be ready to take advantage of any favourable impacts that may arise from climate change.

I thank you Mr. chairman.