



FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE

Thirty-fourth Session

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Statement by the Spokesperson of the Private Sector (PS)

Dear Director General of FAO,
Esteemed delegates,
Dear guests,

1. My name is Alexander Anton, secretary general of the European Dairy Association, and it is a honour for me to speak on behalf of Private Sector Consultation, which has been facilitated by FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia.
2. Let me start by saying that collective effort and joint actions are needed to drive forward agri-food systems' transformation and accelerate the Agenda 2030 implementation.
3. Without any doubt the private sector has an important role in improving food security and supporting the transformation of food systems – and we are aware of the responsibility that comes with this role.
4. There are several angles where private sector participation is especially crucial:
5. By driving innovation, strengthening value chains, promoting sustainable corporate practices, investing in rural development, the private sector can contribute to creating resilient and inclusive food systems, that deliver.
6. Enhancing food security and transforming food systems requires a collaborative effort involving various stakeholders.
7. A public-private model involving innovative, blended financing and shared technical expertise can leverage stakeholders' strengths, to address food security challenges effectively and sustainably.
8. There are components of the food system and agri-food value chains that could be scaled up and sustainably implemented using innovative public-private sector models and blended finance mechanisms.
9. The role of the private sector is critical for long-term sustainability.

10. Governments, the UN and development partners need to work together to establish an enabling environment for responsible private financing and long-term investments, including providing safeguards and targeted policies to boost investment.
11. It is important to keep in mind that local businesses – especially farmers and small-scale farmers and the processing industry – constitute a very considerable and important part and have a direct impact on food security and accessible high-quality nutrition.
12. Increasing and scaling-up private sector engagement in sustainable and resilient agri-food systems requires network facilitation to share and promote specific innovations and good practices and facilitate learning.
13. Increasing participation of the private sector in food systems policy, for example through food policy councils or other multi-stakeholder platforms, is one of the good initiatives which should be promoted and replicated, taking into account the local and regional context.
14. Whilst it is thus clear that the private sector is already able to play a crucial role in supporting agri-food systems transformation, the specific and practical role of the private sector still has to be chartered and tailored to specific contexts and technical issues.
15. FAO has a huge role to play here as a facilitator and convener of multi-stakeholder dialogues, and a policy-making forum with a unique ability to attract and develop various partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders.
16. With this let me conclude by congratulating the FAO regional team for their outstanding work and by sharing with our hosts, the Republic of Moldavia how much we appreciate their efforts and how much we are looking forward to meet in Chişinău as soon as possible.
17. May I wish this conference productive discussions and success in setting course for the next biennium work in our region.