

Aide memoire

<i>Session</i>	1 Opening session and setting the scene
<i>Title of presentation</i>	Achieving sustainable food systems
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Abstract

Food and agriculture are key to achieving the entire set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes that we can no longer look at food, livelihoods and the management of natural resources separately. A focus on rural development and investment in agriculture - crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture – are powerful tools to end poverty and hunger, and bring about sustainable development. There is enough food for everyone on the planet today, yet almost 800 million people suffer hunger. Countries have made a comprehensive approach to food security central to achieving the SDGs. Food – the way it is grown, produced, traded, transported, processed, stored and marketed – is the fundamental connection between people and the planet, and the path to inclusive and economic growth.

Equally biodiversity is central to the Agenda’s achievement, as it is key to ensure food security and nutrition and to the livelihoods of the most vulnerable populations, the majority of which depend directly on agriculture, forestry and fisheries for their very subsistence, and to other ecosystem services like fertile soils or clean water. Addressing the indirect and direct drivers of biodiversity loss requires a focus on primary sectors (agriculture, forests, fisheries and aquaculture). These sectors both impact on biodiversity and are dependent on biodiversity. FAO therefore, in one way or the other, supports most of the Aichi Targets, either by supporting biodiversity friendly policies/ activities or by preventing negative externalities from the agricultural sectors.

FAO as an international policy forum on sustainable agriculture

Besides being a host organization for two biodiversity related conventions, FAO hosts more than 70 instruments and mechanisms on different aspects of the sustainability of sectoral and cross-sectoral issues in agriculture. Many of these instruments/ mechanisms are directly or indirectly biodiversity related. FAO also prepares technical guidelines or standards to help countries implement global instruments, or documents as a basis for discussion and dialogue on the way towards sustainable food and agriculture¹. So far, there is no agreement on sustainable food and agriculture and how it relates to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Transitioning towards more sustainable food and agricultural systems is a dynamic process and is context specific. The solutions must be context specific, and the stakeholders will need to adjust and change the selected practices and policies over time.

FAO’s support to countries in integrating biodiversity considerations into agricultural practices

FAO supports countries in the implementation of international agreements, through policy and technical advice, working hand-in-hand with governments, small producers, the private sector and other key actors on food security and sustainable development in projects and programmes. FAO country offices are aligning their efforts with UN Country Teams to ensure SDGs are integrated within national and regional planning. FAO is also fostering innovation and expertise by forming partnerships, e.g. with Google to map in real time the forest, agriculture and land uses changes. Currently, FAO supports more than 200 projects of nearly 500 Mill USD on biodiversity, ecosystem, genetic resources, conservation or restoration. It is expected that country requests for inclusion of biodiversity into projects and programmes will increase.

¹ <http://www.fao.org/3/919235b7-4553-4a4a-bf38-a76797dc5b23/i3940e.pdf>