

Statement by the Head of the Danish Delegation
Permanent Secretary, Mr. Ib Byrge Sørensen
Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries
38th session of the FAO Conference, Rome, 15th – 22nd June 2013

Item 9: Review of the state of Food and Agriculture
Theme: “Sustainable Food Systems for Food Security and Nutrition”

Mr. Chairman, your Excellencies, distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen
Director General, Mr. José Graziano da Silva.

Mr. da Silva, you can indeed continue to rely on Denmark in this organization’s immense contribution to eradicate malnutrition, and in your efforts to make FAO more cost-efficient.

Secondly I welcome the appointment of Mr. Wilfred Joseph Ngirwa, as Independent Chairman of the FAO Council.

The commitment of the international community in the Millennium Declaration to reduce by half the number of people, who suffer from hunger by 2015, is thus still within reach. Policies geared towards productivity must be accompanied by crop diversification strategies, education and –the most important one – “behavioural changes”.

There is a need for a dramatic improvement in the level as well as in the quality of investment in sustainable agriculture with emphasis on the scarcity of water, energy and soil. Huge problems concerning the ongoing waste of food have to be addressed and the real residues from food production, i.e. fibres from crops and animal waste products also, have to be re-cycled.

Scaling up investments with a resource-efficient scope and building resilience in the global food system is mandatory for all regions and all nations. We ought to produce more with less; less residues, fewer pesticides, less energy, less water and less CO2 emissions. All with the purpose of feeding all human beings globally in a long term sustainable way – and still keep focus on the preservation of nature.

What we need is a targeted cooperation between companies, public agencies and authorities, research institutions and civil society that will strengthen the standards for sustainability, for resource-efficiency and Life Cycle Analysis methods (LCA) on an international level.

These indicators must be founded on scientific knowledge and best practice, be robust, transparent and also re-duplicable in any relevant context. The aim is to reduce the environmental impact of food production.

I strongly support the FAO multi-stakeholder initiative concerning partnership on benchmarking and monitoring the environmental performance of livestock supply chain and the Global Agenda of Action for sustainable livestock, GAA.

Denmark has launched an ambitious project called the Moon Pig (first pig on the Moon). We want to develop the future livestock facilities for intensive pig production. The goal is to ensure, in combination, continued growth and sustainability of livestock production in Denmark and globally. The initiative shall – through public-private-partnership – develop new innovative methods and technologies, which will make it possible to measure all residues and emissions from intensive pig production. This initiative shall demonstrate a profitable production which does not harm the environment and includes high animal welfare. The aim is to decoupling our pig production from the farmland and to produce more from less. This requires a new regulatory framework where we set a target for the acceptable level of emissions instead of the input-regulation we use today.

Pertaining malnutrition I shall emphasize the negative impact from malnutrition on education and each individual's possible contribution to prosperity for local communities. These abovementioned important issues have also to be seen as a crucial contribution to the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that globally we shall only prevail, if we all – at international, national, regional and individual level – take on our responsibilities combating injustice, mismanagement, corruption and lack of opportunities for every human being.

The means we all have includes professional governance, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. In that respect a strong focus on the empowerments and rights of women and girls, gender equality and the prevention and combating of any kind of violence against women are essential preconditions for equitable and inclusive development.

The Director-General can count on our continued strong commitment, but Denmark's position pertaining the budget is quite firm; FAO must also implement focused measures in order to obtain a more cost-effective and efficient structure without reducing its core functions

Thank you for your attention – Thank you, Mr. Chairman.