



T20 Statement for the G20 Agriculture Ministers' Meeting **Florence, 17-18 September 2021**

The G20 meeting of Agriculture Ministers that will take place in Florence on the 17th and 18th of September aims to promote three key priorities, which are deeply linked to SDG2 and the overall Agenda 2030: ensuring the sustainability and resilience of agri-food systems; supporting the efforts to eradicate hunger through agriculture, and contributing to the debate of the UN Food Systems Summit.

G20 members should provide collective and coordinated leadership to effectively tackle food crises, promote an inclusive, coalition-based multi-stakeholder approach, and renew Governments' financial and political commitments to address malnutrition in all its forms. It is possible to achieve food security and nutritious diets for all without adversely affecting the environment and biodiversity. While global food production has tripled with more food per person at lower prices, the Covid-19 pandemic has exposed billions who do not yet have regular access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to further stress.

The T20 Italy Task Forces on “Climate Change, Energy Sustainability and Environment” and on “Agenda 2030 and Development Cooperation” contribute to addressing these challenges by engaging think tank leaders and experts around the world to provide evidence-based guidance to G20 leaders ahead of the G20 Summit.

The current challenges

The pandemic has had a huge impact on food security and nutrition worldwide: projections show that as a result of Covid-19, there could be an additional 83–132 million undernourished adults, 9.3 million additional children who may suffer from wasting and even 2.6 million more children who could be stunted by 2022. This adds up to the already enormous challenge of ending moderate and severe food insecurity for the [2.5 billion people who face this risk](#).

Moreover, the current crisis has unmasked the inextricable link between human, animal, and planetary health, and their shared environment, the so-called “One Health”. It is no coincidence that in the last 20 years, around two-thirds of the emerging infections have originated from animals and are linked to the destruction of ecosystems that is accelerated by urbanization, extractive industries, intensive food production, and deforestation. Therefore, establishing synergies among these work areas is essential to prevent and mitigate the impact of new outbreak diseases, while improving the immunological response of all organisms to existing and new pathogens of zoonotic origin. Finally, the pandemic has highlighted how crucial it is for countries to have an adequate degree of self-sufficiency in food production. Local smallholder farmers are key players for securing enough supply in developing countries.

Our recommendations

The G20 should ensure that effective policies and initiatives are put in place to drive food systems transformation, meet sustainability criteria and ultimately leave no one behind. The Task Force 5 acknowledges the importance of the June [Matera Declaration](#), which has put food security and nutrition as priority issues on the international political agenda and has called for innovative medium and long-term policies and investments in agriculture and food systems.

The Declaration has also invited all partners to support the FAO-led Food Coalition to address current food emergencies, build resilient and sustainable food systems, and eradicate hunger by 2030. Therefore, the T20 recommends the G20 Agriculture Ministers and the Italian G20 Presidency the following policy recommendations and proposals. Such a horizontal, cross-cutting menu of interventions is essential to avoid a silos-approach to food security-related issues.

- The Italian G20 Presidency should ensure full alignment and coherence with other key nutrition-related milestones that will take place in 2021. Building on the Matera Declaration, the G20 should establish strong synergies with the upcoming UN Food Systems Summit, the COP26, the COP15 on Biodiversity and the Nutrition for Growth Summit. The G20 members should seize these opportunities to catalyze investments towards multi-sectoral nutrition programs to ensure recovery and increase resilience in case of future pandemics;
- The Italian G20 Presidency should establish a permanent joint Thematic Group on the AFOLU sector (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) that brings together Agriculture, Finance, Development, Environment, and Health Ministers to ensure policy coherence across their respective policy areas in relation to food security and food systems. This Group should address issues of transparency in food supply chains, climate emissions reductions, provision of natural eco-services, support for nutrition-sensitive interventions, and promotion of integrated approach to food governance that strengthen urban-rural linkages;
- G20 policies should empower small farmers by fully integrating them into regional value chains so that developing countries with a comparative advantage in agriculture are not compromised by the domination of global value chains by a handful of Trans-National Corporations;
- The G20 should reach consensus on how to repurpose agricultural subsidies of advanced economies to avoid unfair competition for smaller producers in Low and Middle Income Countries (LMICs) and truly support the transition towards sustainable farming practices and restoration activities;
- The G20 countries should enhance effective social protection programs to tackle the emergency, reducing vulnerabilities and achieving food security to support the most in need, such as informal workers and children. Investments in food security, nutrition, and sustainable food systems should be full-fledged pillars of COVID-19 emergency funds and recovery packages.
- The Italian G20 Presidency should identify strategies to operationalize the One Health approach on sustainable food systems, promoting policies to properly manage these intersections, minimizing risks, and avoiding unintended consequences.
- The G20 countries should address all those regulatory bottlenecks (e.g. land usage, energy subsidies, tax incentives) to support the development of urban farming practices and minimize their carbon footprint.
- The Italian G20 Presidency should promote the digital transformation of agriculture using the new technological enablers (e.g. digital data-centric and information-centric technologies) that provide fine grained data-rich analysis of the various stages of agricultural production across the end-to-end food value chain.



- The G20 should encourage a shift towards more sustainable diets for our health and the planet's one. These should be based on a reduced share of animal-based proteins in the global protein consumption mix and richer in fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes and whole grains.

Conclusion

G20 countries have a strong responsibility to create more equitable and sustainable food systems in the broader context of changing land use systems, that also advance the FAO's Right to Food Guidelines of availability, access, utilization, and stability.

The G20 economies produce up to 80 percent of the world's total cereal production and account for a similar share of world agricultural exports. Therefore, G20 actions, both domestically and globally, are critical for the promotion of sustainable growth in food and agriculture, for fostering better nutrition, and for building the world back better and more equitably.

The Italian G20 Presidency should establish stronger coordination with future Indonesian and Indian Presidencies to build an effective legacy and contribute to addressing food security and nutrition with a long-term, horizontal, and cross-cutting approach in a "3 Is" (Italy, Indonesia and India) perspective.

