The UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development

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Your excellencies the ministers, distinguished delegates, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

Last year has seen two landmark events: the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals and the adoption of the Paris agreement on climate change.

The 2030 Agenda is an ambitious and comprehensive agenda for action. It is comprised of: the SDGs themselves, as well as the Paris Agreement (COP21 on Climate) and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. As such, it identifies technical priorities, systemic issues, and financial as well as non-financial “means of implementation”.

The SDGs are a set of 17 goals for the world’s future, through 2030, backed up by a set of 169 detailed targets.

The SDGs are built on the achievements of the MDGs, but also recognized a lot of unfinished business and the need for a dramatically new approach and vision for development. It brings a much broader and bolder agenda for sustainable development that includes a commitment to historic action on climate change, transition to sustainable food and agriculture systems, conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, and protection of biodiversity and vital ecosystems.

The 8 Millennium Development Goals, from 2000 to 2015, had varied success.
72 developing countries have achieved MDG 1 target of halving the proportion of hungry people.

Still, almost 800 million people remain undernourished, compared to 1 billion in the early 1990s.

Moreover, when we held the first International Conference on Nutrition in 1992, there were two billion people with micronutrient deficiencies. We still have two billion people who are micronutrient deficient.

A shocking number – a third – of children in developing countries are stunted due to inadequate nutrients. Lives are being damaged, and money and human capital are being wasted. Malnutrition may cost as much as five percent of global economic activity.

Nutrition is not just about calories, but also about balanced diets. Obesity, for instance, is a nutrition problem, and FAO is concerned about its rise in more developed countries, and even in some developing countries.

And the MDG targets on environmental protection have not been met, conditions are worse.

SDGs are a transformative agenda. They differ from the MDGs in many ways.

The MDGs were mainly aimed at developing countries. The SDGs are universal – relevant to all nations, adaptable to different contexts.

The MDGs were 8 isolate goals, with limited attention to sustainability. The 17 goals and 169 targets of the SDG are linked laterally, with the three dimensions of sustainable development integrated everywhere.
The MDGs were coordinated by the UN secretariat. The SDGs have been negotiated by UN member states over three years with broad multistakeholder consultation and country ownership.

The means of implementation of the MDGs were limited largely to North-South finance, with weak reporting and follow-up and review.

For the SDGs the means of implementation includes market access, technology transfer capacity development and policy support, robust global architecture for monitoring, follow-up and review.

**Food security and nutrition is central to the achievement of the SDGs**

SDG #2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

Nearly all SDGs depend on this goal and/or contribute to it.

Without rapid progress in eliminating hunger, malnutrition and rural poverty by 2030, other SDGs cannot be achieved. And the other SDGs are necessary for ending hunger and extreme poverty.

It is possible to eradicate hunger by 2030. This requires a combination of pro-poor investments in sustainable agriculture and rural development and social protection measures to immediately lift people out of chronic undernourishment and poverty.

The adoption of the Paris agreement on climate change marks a turning point in the efforts to address climate change. It is also a turning point in the recognition of the importance of food security, agriculture and land use in the climate change discussions.
The role of FAO

The development of the SDGs is a major achievement, resulting from a considerable engagement of the international community. FAO has played its part in it. Directly or indirectly, FAO’s work is related to all of the 17 Goals.

With its expertise and resources, FAO is custodian of 20 of the indicators of the SDGs, and is well positioned to support countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

FAO’s corporate approach to the 2030 Agenda is to address three key policy themes of hunger and poverty eradication, sustainable agricultural development and sustainable use of natural resources, and climate change, in an integrated, holistic way.

How will FAO help countries “domesticate” the 2030 Agenda?

First: by proposing a common vision for sustainable food and agriculture based on 5 principles:

- 1. Improving efficiency in the use of resources;
- 2. Conserving, protecting and enhancing natural ecosystems;
- 3. Protecting and improving rural livelihoods and social well-being;
- 4. Enhancing the resilience of people, communities and ecosystems;
- 5. Promoting good governance of both natural and human systems.

Second: by providing technical and policy support at country level
Third: By supporting country and regional initiatives to build capacity for producing the SDG indicators and thus turn SDGs and their targets into a management tool that helps countries develop policies and allocate resources.

Fourth: By helping countries mobilize resources to achieve the goals.

One of FAO’s key approaches is to support multi-stakeholder processes by working with governments to convene constituencies and facilitate policy dialog and convergence among stakeholders. The Global Agenda for Sustainable Livestock is a very good example of what can be done.

Allow me to recall the genesis of the Agenda. In 2010, the FAO Committee on Agriculture (COAG) recommended that FAO investigate suitable options for stakeholder dialogue and concerted action in support of sustainable livestock sector development.

Subsequently, a number of countries and international organizations, called the Dialogue group, initiated the process. They recommended the development of an Agenda, to shape the sector’s role in future global food production systems.

The Global Agenda was then endorsed by COAG during its 23rd session in May 2012 as a valid mechanism to inform, guide, and enrich FAO’s inter-governmental processes.

Subsequently, the 38th FAO Conference in its report

(i) supported the Agenda as a multi-stakeholder initiative;

(ii) invited Member Nations to broadly participate in this initiative;
(iii) stressed the need for concrete results in the field;

(iv) further recommended that FAO continue its central engagement, act as its Secretary; and

(v) requested that a governance system for this initiative be elaborated, in line with the FAO strategies on partnership with the private sector and civil society, and defining its relationship to COAG, to be presented at the Session of COAG in 2014.

FAO indeed reported on the Global Agenda in COAG in 2014, and will do so again this year.

Colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

FAO believes that the Global Agenda for Sustainable Livestock is an important global agenda for the livestock sector towards achieving the SDGs and the Paris Agreement. It builds a common vision on the role of the livestock sector, it provides a framework and a platform for dialogue and exchange of information, knowledge and the best practices. It is owned by all the stakeholder groups represented here.

Let us not miss the unprecedented opportunities offered by the Agenda as well as by the calendar of events I highlight here, as in the livestock sector you are ahead of the curve.

Soon after this Partners Assembly, there will be the COAG in September and the UN Committee on World Food Security, the CFS, which will have a discussion on “Sustainable agriculture development for food security and nutrition, including the role of
livestock”, informed by a report of the High Level Panel of Experts on food security and nutrition.

As the UN Secretary General Ban Kee Moon said, we will be the first generation to end hunger, and the last generation to end climate change.

The Global Agenda for Sustainable Livestock reflects this ambition.

Our priority for 2016 is to put the Agenda to action, and to work together to make it happen, towards a transformative change for sustainable development, at the national and the global scales.

Thank you.