

Fifth APEC Ministerial Meeting on Food Security: Puerto Varas, Chile, 23 August 2019
Towards Integrated Smart and Sustainable Food Systems

Preamble

1. We, the APEC Ministers Responsible for Food Security, met in Puerto Varas, Chile, from 23 to 24 August 2019 under the chairmanship of Mr. Antonio Walker, Minister of Agriculture of Chile, to exchange views and identify areas of cooperation that support food security in the Asia-Pacific region. We welcomed the participation of representatives of FAO, OECD and IICA.
2. Under the overarching theme of “Connecting People, Building the Future”, and recognizing that Sustainable Growth, Digital Society, Integration 4.0 and Women, SMEs and Inclusive Growth are the priorities of APEC Chile 2019, we seek to address key issues related to food security by identifying common priorities as well as cooperating in defining and implementing better policies towards integrated, smart and sustainable food systems.
3. Our region faces major challenges in terms of food security. We must find ways to provide our rapidly growing global population with economic access to sufficient, safe, nutritious and quality food. Furthermore, the livelihoods of millions of rural people, mainly small farmers and fishers, particularly women, rely on jobs and incomes provided by food production and food-related economic activities.
4. Moreover, food systems have a dynamic relationship with the environment. We acknowledge the growing impact that global changes, such as extreme climate variability; increasing natural disasters; land, soil and marine habitat degradation; freshwater scarcity; loss of biological diversity; and the emergence of new pests and diseases have on the development of productive sectors such as agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries.
5. We seek smart solutions, which will be crucial to achieving the complementary objectives of increased productivity, sustainability, inclusiveness and resilience.

Fostering sustainable food systems

6. For food systems to effectively adapt to global changes while securing long-term food security, we encourage the development and implementation of integrated policies for agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries in line with the spirit of the APEC Food Security Roadmap Towards 2020 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This will contribute to improving productivity, reducing food loss and waste, ensuring the conservation, protection and sustainable use of water, land and marine ecosystems, biodiversity and natural resources, as well as enhancing society’s wellbeing.
7. The resilience of our food systems to climate variability is a priority for our economies because agricultural production is closely linked to weather conditions. We recognize the positive role that agriculture can play in providing solutions to global challenges. Reducing food loss and waste can also be an adaptive and mitigation option to reduce the food security risks of new climate scenarios. We support strengthening regional cooperation with an aim to creating enabling conditions to face the challenges and leverage the opportunities brought by globally changing climatic conditions.
8. We underscore that the efficient use and sustainable management of water as well as robust water policies are critical for the economic performance, social inclusiveness and environmental sustainability of the whole food system. We highlight the importance of sharing best practices in these areas.
9. We acknowledge that the prevention and reduction of food loss and waste is a multidimensional challenge that continues to affect food security and environmental sustainability in the APEC region. We highlight the importance of strengthening policies along the entire food chain with the contribution of all relevant stakeholders. We support further APEC cooperation in generating information and improving measurements; strengthening partnerships with all stakeholders; encouraging research, development and innovation, including information and communications technology (ICT); raising awareness and building capacity; and developing robust policies to prevent and reduce food loss and waste.
10. We recognize the significance of seafood consumption, which provides nearly 22 percent of the average per capita animal protein intake for the APEC region. In this context, we underscore the importance of protecting the marine environment and ensuring the sustainable use of fisheries and aquaculture resources. We call for continued action to address certain forms of fisheries subsidies as agreed at the 2019 APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade meeting and to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, both of which harm livelihoods, threaten food security and impede sustainable growth. We welcome the APEC Roadmap on Combatting IUU Fishing.
11. We recognize that marine debris, including marine plastic pollution, as a global and multidisciplinary problem, has an increasingly adverse impact on the ocean environment, coastal livelihoods, food security and sustainable growth. We urge economies to work together to implement and promote measures to manage and prevent marine debris, including innovative sustainable waste management systems and sustainable agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries practices. We welcome the APEC Roadmap on Marine Debris which supports APEC’s food security goals.

Embracing innovation, emerging technologies and digital opportunities

12. Innovation, emerging technologies and digitalization are engines for sustainable productivity growth in the agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture food sectors and will be critical for solving many of our current challenges. We encourage officials to make innovation a priority, including through effective coordination with all relevant stakeholders, with an emphasis on the creation and appropriate adoption of new technologies.
13. We encourage economies to develop and maintain transparent and science-based regulatory frameworks and to share information and experiences.
14. We acknowledge that the “digitalization” of agriculture impacts the way that agricultural products are grown, produced and distributed at different stages of food value chains. In this fast-changing context, we urge deeper collaboration and dialogue in APEC with the aim of identifying common approaches to promoting technology adoption, challenges and opportunities for human capital, and developing policy that targets local realities, effectively leveraging the opportunities from the digital transformation, sustainably and inclusively.

Leveraging associativity and enhancing food value chains and trade

15. Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), including small-scale farmers, fishers and aquaculturalists, indigenous peoples, and women in particular, face constraints to being competitive in food value chains. Individually these actors may have limited capacity to negotiate and less access to the financial system, market information and new technologies, among other challenges. To strengthen their resilience and adaptive capacity, we support promoting more inclusive food value chains, identifying new trading opportunities, and encouraging well-functioning markets.
16. Associativity, defined as alliances and collaborative initiatives along the supply chain, could be a key dimension to drive progress towards achieving inclusive economic growth. We encourage the development of business models that promote associativity among MSMEs and with other stakeholders, to improve productivity and competitiveness and strengthen alliances throughout the supply chain, allowing new stakeholders to participate in domestic and global food value chains.
17. We stress the importance that international trade has for food security. We recognize that efficient and sustainable food systems require timely access to international markets. To this end we affirm the importance of transparent, non-discriminatory and agreed-upon rules, which enhance market predictability, enable business confidence, and allow food trade to flow. We recognize that measures which are inconsistent with international rules, obligations, and science-based standards, including non-tariff barriers, may undermine food security.

Strengthening Rural Development as a Place of Opportunities

18. We acknowledge the importance of promoting the development of rural and coastal communities as they are one of the foundations of the food system in most of our economies. We recognize that robust and site-specific policies are required to promote the comprehensive development of rural populations, which reflect the diversity of needs and opportunities. We encourage rural policies that address issues beyond agriculture and promote rural development with a holistic approach that accounts for economic, social, environmental and cultural dimensions, and working with all stakeholders.
19. We encourage policies that improve infrastructure, basic services and the quality of life of rural populations as well as strategies that help develop sustainable and market-based methods for adding value to agricultural, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture while promoting the integration of MSMEs within food value chains.
20. We highlight the importance of promoting competitive, sustainable and quality food systems, including traditional systems that contribute to rural development.
21. We encourage the incorporation of gender into the design of rural development policies from the very outset. Higher levels of women participation in the economy is key to raising living standards and boosting economic growth in the region. We recognize the significant contribution and impact that women have in rural and coastal communities. Recognizing the importance of empowering women, we take note of the ongoing initiative to develop APEC Best Practice Guidelines on Women in Agriculture and Fisheries and we look forward to the outcomes.

Looking forward

22. We support the efforts of the PPFs, ATCWG, HLPDAB and OFWG within APEC that contribute to food security and encourage these groups to strengthen their collaboration in working towards integrated, smart and sustainable food systems.
23. We reiterate the importance of public and private sector collaboration in addressing current and future challenges for food security. We affirm the importance of strengthening and invigorating APEC engagement with the private sector including ABAC in PPFs.
24. Reflecting on our efforts under the APEC Food Security Roadmap Towards 2020, we call for the review and identification of ongoing priorities and future opportunities to enhance food security in the region beyond 2020.