

“Making agriculture a future for youth in Africa”

The African Union - European Union Agriculture Ministers Conference

2 July 2017, Rome, Italy

2017 is a defining year for strengthening the partnership between Europe and Africa. The 5th Africa-EU Summit in November 2017 is a key opportunity to give a new impetus to this partnership. Profound economic and societal transformational changes are taking place in Africa. The demographic growth is extraordinary: according to United Nations projections, Africa’s population is expected to double by 2050, from 1.2 billion people to 2.4 billion of predominantly young people. The International Monetary Fund estimates that the continent needs to create 18 million new jobs each year up to 2035, to absorb new labour market entrants, compared to the 3 million jobs per year currently created in the formal economy.

Challenges such as poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition could very well be exacerbated by this population growth. Nevertheless, over the past two decades, Africa demonstrated impressive economic progress and positive transformations, providing new and unique opportunities, such as growing and increasingly integrated markets, a dynamic SMEs sector, natural resources and fertile soil. It is in within the context of improving rural livelihoods for Africa’s young populations that the AU Malabo Declaration, in its commitment to halving poverty on the continent by 2015, resolved to ensure inclusive Agricultural Growth and Transformation on the continent and to this end, recommitted to create job opportunities for at least 30% of the youth in agricultural value chains.

The EU is also at the crossroads: discussing its own future direction but also the future of its relations with the Countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific after the expiry of the Cotonou Agreement in 2020. The EU is Africa's closest neighbour, first foreign investor, first trading partner – offering free access to the EU market via Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA), Free Trade Agreements and the “Everything but Arms initiative”, first partner in development and principal source of remittances. On the other hand, the African governments are progressively negotiating the Continental Free Trade Area aimed at boosting intra-Africa trade. Moreover, Africa’s demographic trends and the increasing mobility and migration add a new dimension to the need for a common agenda to promote sustainable economic development in Africa, in order to create the jobs that the continent needs and to make the most of the opportunities it offers.

Responsible investments in rural areas and the agricultural economy, value chains and integrated markets, accompanied by a better focus on research and innovation and the sustainable management of natural resources, with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and digitalisation as important enablers, have a key role in fostering economic growth, job creation and development in African countries. Agriculture plays a substantial role in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in any sustainable future as it is intrinsically linked to issues such as jobs, food, air, climate change, water, soil and biodiversity. The vision for agriculture-led economic growth and prosperity is consistent with the AU’s Agenda 2063’s first Aspiration of “A prosperous Africa, based on inclusive growth and sustainable development” as read in conjunction with the sixth Aspiration – “An Africa whose development is people driven, relying on the potential offered by its people, especially its women and youth and caring for children”. To this end, the proposed theme of the November AU-EU 5th Summit is befitting and paramount. Young people and women combine as a big segment of the demographic pie in Africa and empowering the youth and women with ‘agropreneurial’ skills and capital must be among this decade’s three-top most priorities.

Livestock contributes 30% of agricultural GDP of many African Countries. Small ruminants are perhaps the most important species because they are easy to manage and their reproduction is relatively rapid. However, small ruminants all over the continent are either affected by Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) or at risk of being affected, with very devastating consequences. This has necessitated the need to eradicate the disease. Considering the fact that small ruminants are mainly managed by women and youths, the objective of eradicating PPR by 2030 will impact positively on their livelihoods and employment, thereby enhancing their wellbeing. The widespread occurrence of PPR in endemic countries, its rapid spread to new areas and high mortality rates threaten the sustainable production of sheep and goats, thereby contributing to social instability and conflict. The loss of livelihoods contributes to the migration of affected populations in search of alternative sources of livelihoods thereby escalating the migration challenges being experienced in Africa. While the demographic profile of migrants varies across different areas in Africa, women, youth and pastoralists typically make up the majority of those moving.

For decades, the EU has been working extensively with African partners to support policies and initiatives in agriculture, to improve the business and investments environment, to advance Africa's economic diversification, as well as to increase public and private investments for agricultural transformation. **Given the challenges ahead, there is a strong sense that this partnership needs to be up-scaled, by better mobilizing and focusing efforts and resources.**

A series of high level political events this year, from the G7 and G20 summits in May and June to the 5th Africa–EU summit in November, along with a number of Africa–EU business forums give a new impetus to a more profound relationship with Africa. The main theme of the Africa-EU Summit is "Youth".

WHAT?

The African Union – European Union Agriculture Ministerial Conference “Making agriculture a future for youth in Africa” is taking place on 2 July in Rome, from 14h00 to 19h00, in the FAO Headquarters.

Considering the key role of agricultural development for structural transformation in Africa, **the aim of the conference is to build up political engagement ahead of the EU-Africa Summit in November on a common vision on how to generate sustainable and inclusive economic growth, supporting decent job creation for African youth in the agri-food and non-food sector and rural economy.**

WHO?

Ministers of Agriculture from the AU and the EU are invited to participate in this high level event, organised in the margins of the FAO bi-annual Conference. The meeting brings together partner organisations in the European Union and in the African Union, agri-businesses and farmers' organisations from EU and African countries, international organisations, development agencies and NGOs.

The conference will be co-hosted by the African Union Commission, the European Commission and the Estonian Presidency of the EU.

It builds up on the first AU-EU Agriculture Ministerial Meeting under the theme "Investing in a Food Secure Future" organised in July 2016 in Noordwijk, the Netherlands.

HOW?

The debates have been planned to be channeled through four main thematic areas discussed in concurrent sessions:

- **Promote responsible private sector investments in the agri-food and non-food sector in Africa.** The role of the private sector is crucial in boosting agriculture and agribusiness in Africa, as the public sector cannot stimulate alone the necessary agricultural transformation. Debates will focus on how to mobilize and incentivize private agri-food sectors to invest in Africa and make investments profitable, socially acceptable and environmentally sustainable; how to accompany the countries in providing and improving the right framework for sustainable responsible investments; how to create decent jobs for youth and women and bring about sustainable growth. The session will also examine access to finance for value chain investments, as well as on facilitating trade and market access for agri-food and non-food products. **There will be a statement by an African Minister on Peste des Petits Ruminants eradication: enabling environment for increased investment. The eradication of PPR and the control of other priority small ruminant diseases will reduce the risks of private sector investments in small ruminant production, value addition, trade and marketing. This will, therefore, stimulate private sector investments and involvement in the sub-sector. Such investments will generate opportunities for the employment of women and youth and other actors along the small ruminants' value chains thus contributing to their economic empowerment.** Moreover, the PIMA tool developed by the WTO STDF provides an efficient mechanism for supporting governments in making SPS investment decisions to enhance developing countries' capacities to implement the WTO SPS Agreement for improved international trade.
- **Research and innovation and the role of digitization in agriculture and nutrition-sensitive food systems.** Fostering innovation and deepening collaborative research is crucial for sustainable growth and jobs in agriculture. Food and non-food pricing policies and structural rural transformation are increasingly recognised as key determinants of agriculture development. Within that context, the access and use of ICT, technology and big data are important enablers for development, including making farming more attractive to young people. Enhancing connectivity, promoting e-Agriculture, digital entrepreneurship, mobile payments in African agriculture need to be accompanied by supportive policies tackling among others, prices, taxation and the regulatory environment. Farmers also need to have a fair share of the value added in the food and non-food chains. These call for policy frameworks to encourage them to be better organised and have a stronger participation in food and non-food value chains, as well as to ensure that farming remains an attractive profession for young entrepreneurs.
- **Sustainable agricultural water management and enhanced water, energy, food and ecosystem nexus.** A large number of African regions have abundant water but, at the same time, suffer from long and severe drought periods and/or extreme water scarcity. Sustainable, efficient agriculture would imply better use of irrigation and drainage technologies. Dialogue on policies on agricultural and integrated water-energy-food-ecosystem management practices needs to be supported to ensure enhanced investments in use of water-efficient, sustainable and safe technologies which limit waste, pollution and over use, land degradation and desertification.
- **Climate smart agriculture (CSA) and food loss and waste.** If trends in climate change and waste in food systems remain unchecked, food production would have to increase by about 70% to feed an estimated 9 billion people by 2050, with unprecedented consequences for the environment and society. In describing tensions between maximizing global agricultural

productivity, increasing resilience of agricultural systems in the face of climate change and mitigating greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from agriculture, CSA has the capacity to unite the agendas of the agriculture, development and climate change communities under one brand. CSA has been applied to diverse aspects of agriculture, ranging from field-scale agricultural practices to food supply chains and food systems generally and therefore better postharvest processing and storage methods are imperative for mitigating potential crop losses due to increased weather extremes. There is an urgent need to minimize the damage caused to the environment by the production of food that is never eaten because the 1.3 billion tonnes of food that gets lost or wasted globally each year is the equivalent of 6 to 10 percent of human-generated greenhouse gas emissions. Moreover, addressing priority food safety and quality challenges is crucial to make African agriculture competitive, boost trade and revitalize the sector and attract the youth. The platform would be used to create an elevated awareness of the essential need to fully embed food safety within the matrix of food security and vibrant agriculture, and drive new policies, programs and initiatives in a holistic manner to manage the harmful impacts of all forms of food safety hazards from the farm to the fork.

- **Increasing productivity through investment in postharvest loss reduction:**

Food loss and waste continue to be a global phenomenon and is not restricted to the African continent alone. It is estimated that roughly one-third of the food produced in the world for human consumption gets wasted. Food losses and waste amount to roughly USD 680 billion in industrialized countries and USD 310 billion in developing countries (FAO). Total quantitative food loss in sub-Saharan Africa has been estimated at 100 million MT/year. For grains alone, the value of post-harvest losses is estimated to equate to approximately USD 4 billion/year (at 2007 prices), which could meet the annual food requirements of about 48 million people and exceeds the annual value of grain imports into Africa and the value of total food aid received in sub-Saharan Africa over the past decade. The 2014 Malabo Declaration called on AU Member States to reduce postharvest losses from the current levels by half by the year 2025. This is part of the efforts toward achievement of the continent's efforts toward increasing productivity, food security and ending hunger on the continent by 2025. Hence the session is therefore purposed to take stock of the ongoing development efforts and build consensus on required partnerships toward the achievement of the 2025 AU targets.

AU-IBAR SIDE MEETING: 2ND JULY FROM 10.00 TO 12.00

ERADICATION OF PESTE DES PETITS RUMINANTS AND CONTROL OF OTHER PRIORITY SMALL RUMINANTS DISEASES, AND STOCK-TAKING ON THE AU-EU PARTNERSHIP SUCCESS STORIES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ANIMAL RESOURCES IN AFRICA

By paying particular attention to rural women, youth and small holder livestock owners, PPR eradication will contribute to poverty alleviation, food and nutrition security, build the resilience of drought-prone pastoral communities and overcome trade barriers to livestock exports. It will eventually offer African countries with better opportunities to benefit from the livestock revolution while at the same time fostering regional integration. These will increase opportunities for income generation for livestock dependent communities/households and thus enhance their resilience, reducing the need for migration in search of alternative livelihood opportunities. Gainful employment will have positive impacts on the fragile environments where small ruminants are produced as the value chain actors will have incentives for not participating in alternative income generation activities that result in environmental degradation. In addition, the benefits from small ruminants' production and trade will motivate awareness and provide incentives for participation in the sustainable utilisation and management of the environment and natural resources thus mitigating the potential negative impacts on the environment of increased numbers of small ruminants that will result from the

eradication of PPR. Business models that enhance the off-take of small ruminants through sales will further minimise the potential impacts on the environment due to the increased numbers of small ruminants.

The session is therefore purposed for discussion of the pan-african PPR eradication programme, taking stock of on-going initiatives and mobilising resources for coordination of interventions across Africa. This session will also take stock of AU-EU partnership success stories in the development of animal resources in Africa. These success stories are attached to this document.

WHAT NEXT?

The conclusions of the Ministerial Conference will be reported to the 5th Africa - EU Summit in November 2017, and will guide the next steps in the technical collaboration between the European Commission and the African Union Commission in this area.