



## **2<sup>nd</sup> MEETING OF THE BSEC MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE**

**Istanbul, 16-17 May 2017**

### **Draft Concept Note**

#### **I. Cooperation in the field of Agriculture during the Turkish Chairmanship-in-Office of BSEC**

The Republic of Turkey has assumed the Chairmanship-in-Office of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) for the term of 1 January-30 June 2017. During this period, a Summit of the Heads of State or Government will be organized to celebrate BSEC's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with the theme of **"Strengthening Partnership for Sustainable Development"**, one of the key priorities of the Turkish Chairmanship-in-Office is to give new impetus to BSEC cooperation in the field of agriculture and agro-industry with a result and impact oriented approach.

The Turkish Chairmanship acknowledges that agriculture and agro-industry play a strategic role in the social structure and economic development of all BSEC Member States. In this regard, during the Turkish Chairmanship, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the BSEC Ministers of Agriculture will be organized on 16-17 May 2017, in Istanbul, by the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock of the Republic of Turkey. The main objective of the meeting is to discuss future cooperation at the regional level, focusing on the theme of **"Sustainable Food Systems and the Future of Aquaculture"**. Ministers will release a Joint Declaration outlining their conclusions and recommendations.

The BSEC Agriculture Ministers gathered together in Moscow at 1<sup>st</sup> BSEC Agriculture Ministers Meeting at Russian Federation on 07 October, 2011 and agreed on a Joint Declaration.

#### *Preparing the Ministerial Meeting*

The tentative timetable for preparation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of The BSEC Ministers of Agriculture is as follows.

- 28-29 March Meeting of the Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-industry
- 16 May Senior Officials Meeting
- 17 May Ministerial Meeting

## **II. Current Situation and Future Perspectives**

With the increase in world population, food security and nutrition has become ever more important. World population is expected to reach 9.3 billion by 2050 and changing food consumption patterns as a result of income growth and urbanization, food production will need to increase by sixty percent. Today, although the worldwide food production would be enough for sustaining global demand, due to the disproportionate distribution of and unequal access to food supplies, hunger and famine have become one of the most challenging problems in various regions of the world.

World population is expected to reach 9.7 billion by 2050. In order to nourish the whole population of the world, initiatives regarding sustainable food systems and actions for decreasing the hunger level are needed. To reach these goals, global agricultural production should be increased by 60 percent.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, food security has become a matter that requires intensive international cooperation, based on studies at the national, regional and global levels. The 2<sup>nd</sup> BSEC Agriculture Ministers Meeting is expected to contribute to fostering regional initiatives in this regard.

## **III. Sustainable Food Systems**

Sustainable food systems which include the production, processing, distribution, preparation and consumption of food, promotes sustainable increases in productivity and production, use natural resources more efficiently, increase resilience and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Sustainable food systems also help address to improvement of soil fertility, water retention capacity and restoration of degraded land

and promote not only food security and the more sustainable use of natural resources but also economic and social development.

The concept of sustainability in food systems is based on the protection of resources that future generations will need. However, sustainability reflects an understanding rather than being a target because of its dynamic structure. Food systems can only serve food security as long as this principle prevails in their functioning. In order to fully comprehend sustainable food systems, factors such as food price fluctuations, food loss and waste must be examined in depth.

#### **IV. Aquaculture**

In addition to its direct contribution to global food supply and nutrition, the fisheries sector provides employment to many people, thus contributing indirectly to food security.

Natural resources are affected both by increased population and environmental degradation. As a controlled and planned method of production, aquaculture takes up an important role in meeting the increased demand in consumption, reducing poverty, ensuring food security and, more generally, supporting sustainable economic development and price stability. Considering of aquaculture within the context of nutrition and food security, more emphasis should be put on aquaculture in international cooperation.

Prioritizing the indispensable factors in ensuring food security, namely, agricultural sustainability, food price stability and aquaculture, in the agenda of BSEC, a regional economic cooperation organization of strategic importance, is expected to encourage also other regional and international organizations to focus on food security to the benefit of future generations.

#### **V. Turkey's Efforts and Initiatives to Ensure Food Security**

For many years, Turkey has been carrying out policies and activities which aim to ensure food security throughout the country



and the world. As a result of one such activity, namely, "Eliminate Bread Waste Campaign", the Turkish economy saved 1.3 billion USD. The campaign contributed not only to reducing wasted food, but also to raise awareness in society towards more healthy consumption habits.

Throughout the Turkish Chairmanship of D-8 in 2014 and its Presidency in G20 in 2015, food security, food loss and waste and sustainable food systems have been prioritized in the international agenda.

As a concrete outcome of the Turkish Presidency of G20, a "Technical Platform for the Measurement of Food Loss and Waste" which brings stakeholders from different areas together, has been established at the FAO Headquarters. The aim of this initiative is to improve the measurement of food loss and waste, and to share experiences, good practices and technical know-how in this sphere.

Furthermore upon the joint initiative of Turkey and Pakistan in an effort to reduce poverty and increase food security, the UN General Assembly declared the year of 2016 as the "International Year of Pulses" mainly for increasing both production and consumption of pulses.

## **VI. Expected Outcomes**

Solutions to the problems in food production and agro-industry necessitate cooperation at regional and international levels, with the participation of all stakeholders and policy makers, since individual efforts of states are not sufficient for establishing and maintaining a sustainable global food system.

1- In this context, in line with the aforementioned issues, it is expected that a roadmap for possible activities which could be adopted by the consensus of the BSEC Member States on Sustainable Food Systems and the Future of Aquaculture will be acknowledged at the BSEC Agriculture Ministers Meeting. The proposed theme of the BSEC Agriculture Ministers Meeting is "Sustainable Food Systems and the Future of Aquaculture" and member countries are expected to share their experiences on the subject. Ministers will release a joint declaration outlining



their conclusions and recommendations that will have both political influence as well as practical influence.

- 2- In line with the decisions of the meeting establishing an appropriate mechanism within BSEC (Regional Cooperation Center) with the partnership of FAO is envisaged.



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