



Statement on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States

171th Session of the FAO Council

(5 – 9 December 2022, hybrid)

Item 5.: Integrated water resources management for food security and climate resilience

Madam/ Mr. Chair,

1. I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Montenegro, Norway, The Republic of North Macedonia, San Marino, Türkiye and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.
2. In line with our statement at 28th session of the Committee on Agriculture in the context of item “State of the World’s Land and Water Resources for Food and Agriculture 2021 (SOLAW21)”, we would like to reaffirm that it is important to take a human rights approach that takes into account poverty and food security monitoring.
3. A sustainable, integrated and efficient management of water resources, based on an inclusive, territorial and systemic vision of rural development helps in the fight against poverty.
4. The sustainability of food systems depends to a large extent on the effectiveness of water management. Similarly, integrated water management is not possible without full involvement of food system actors. It is at this interface that FAO’s added value should be found and built.
5. We take note of the elements provided in the background document for this item on the FAO actions in areas related to integrated water resources management. We agree that FAO is in a key position to support sustainable integrated water resources management, within its mandate and in close collaboration with relevant UN agencies such as the UNEP, linking water to major threats that are jeopardizing the environment, and food and agriculture systems. We would like to underline the importance of the work of other UN agencies on the subject of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and the importance for FAO to reinforce coordination on its IWRM activities.
6. Considering that many developing countries already have institutionalised bodies for inter-ministerial exchange on water issues, more information is needed on the added value on the newly proposed initiatives, including on how to support national water roadmaps and on FAOs engagement in policy processes such as the Global Dialogue on Water Tenure, so there is no duplication of work. Furthermore, we would like to know how FAO plans to work together and coordinate with other relevant international organisations.
7. Finally, we support the proposal to address the implementation of sustainable and integrated water resources management in the context of the Agenda 2030 for sustainable development and to include this as the topic for the general debate at the 43rd Session of the Conference and as

the biennial theme for FAO Governing Body sessions in 2024-2025 as the “Sustainable and integrated water resource management for food security and climate resilience”. It also important to address the interlinkage between IWRM, food security and climate resilience as a priority in the UN 2023 Water Conference and we call for strong, action-oriented commitments to address this link.

Thank you, Madam/ Mr. Chair.