



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

174th session of the FAO Council

(4-8 December 2023)

Item 15: Participation of private sector observers in sessions of the FAO Governing Bodies

Madam/Mr Chair,

1. I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
2. [XXX, XXXX, XXXX align themselves with this statement.]
3. The issue of the participation of private sector observers in sessions of the FAO Governing Bodies has been discussed at length in recent years. At the end of these detailed and prolonged discussions, two things appear to be clear.
4. First, the need for consensus among the Members to preserve the intergovernmental nature of the FAO and thus of its governing, statutory and technical bodies.
5. Second, the need for consensus among the Members that the Basic Texts provide an adequate legal framework that needs to be implemented consistently across all FAO bodies rather than to be revised.
6. We therefore support the proposal to develop guidance aimed at ensuring consistency in the implementation of the rules on private sector participation across FAO governing, statutory and technical bodies.
7. We insist that any guidance related to the functioning of intergovernmental bodies has to be developed, examined and ultimately approved by the relevant governing bodies, namely the CCLM and the Council.
8. We note in this respect that the CCLM has been involved early on this issue, which falls directly within its mandate, as per Rule XXXIV, paragraph 7 of the General Rules of the Organization.
9. Finally, we seize this opportunity to reiterate our support to the FAO Strategy for Private Sector Engagement 2021-2025 and its implementation, including the publication of all partnership agreements with the private sector on the CONNECT portal with a view to ensuring transparency and information sharing.

Thank you, Mr Chair.