

# **SWITZERLAND – Statement State Secretary Christian Hofer**

## **Agenda Item VII**

Mr. Chair,

Honorable Ministers,

Excellencies, distinguished delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- It is a pleasure to be here with you today and to close this inspiring Global Thematic Event on the CFS Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems this afternoon.
- I was born in 1972 where I grew up as a farm boy in Switzerland and learned from an early age how important it is to care for nature in order to be able to produce food successfully and sustainably. Access to sufficient safe food has never been an issue for my family.
- The current figures of the SOFI report 2022, which we discussed on Monday at the Ministerial Segment, speak a

different language. Hunger is on the rise and more and more people cannot afford a healthy diet.

- This is unacceptable, reflects a global food system out of balance and requires a transformative change of food and agriculture systems, as we know them today.
- This transformative change is only happening if there is the right and more investment in these systems. It is not only about the quantity but also about the quality of investments.
- The investment needs to transform food systems need to increase significantly for the next decade.
- However, not all investments contribute equally to improving the living conditions of the poorest populations, strengthening sustainable agricultural systems and protecting natural resources. What we need is to re-direct current investments and ensure that new investments are responsible in order to meet the challenges posed by population growth, changing consumer behavior, address climate change and other environmental crisis, high

unemployment rates in rural areas and to successfully overcome hunger and malnutrition.

- Hence, the CFS-RAI haven't lost their relevance since their adoption in 2014, as highlighted by my previous speakers.
- What has my country done with this instrument of the CFS? Switzerland has been committed to the implementation of the CFS-RAI since they were adopted.
- Firstly, from 2017-2021, Switzerland together with FAO initiated a project that developed various strategic planning tools to promote responsible investments for young agripreneurs. The tools were tested and applied in eleven African countries and further developed/fine-tuned in Tunisia. Our national FAO-Committee, which is a 75 years old multistakeholder platform to advise the government on global food security issues, played a leading role in the further development of the tool.
- As Ms. Inji has indicated in her video message, the tool came in response to the need for a policy and strategy to

increase the capacities of young agripreneurs and to promote more and better investments to stop rural outward migration and reduce youth unemployment rates. We are convinced that this experience can be shared with other countries all over the world with the aim to integrate the CFS-RAI into investment promotion processes and policies.

- This brings me to our second example of how we worked for the implementation of the CFS-RAI. Since April 2020, Switzerland has been working with various Southeast Asian countries to use the CFS-RAI as a recognised basis for planning and implementing future investments in agriculture in the region. Furthermore, Switzerland supports the development of a RAI Scoring Tool that allows the private sector to determine how compliant their practices are with the CFS-RAI.
- Ms. Khumnerdpetch highlighted in her intervention the ambitious vision by 2030 aiming to facilitate a measurable increase in responsible and sustainable private sector investment in ASEAN's food, agriculture and forestry

sectors, what we believe can become a model for other regions.

- All these projects supported showed the usefulness of the CFS-RAI and that they can and should be a basis to further develop and implement normative tools that are context and actor specific in order to foster responsible investments to transform agriculture and food systems.
- It is time to upscale the implementation of the CFS-RAI in order to make the transformative change we need to see become a reality. We have only seven harvests left to meet the deadline of the SDGs.
- We have heard many inspiring examples during this GTE 2022, be it, for example, from Mrs Giacoppo highlighting the Practical Guide for Parliamentarians developed together by FAO and the International Institute for Sustainable Development (ISID) or from Mr. Tamba sharing the experience of the application of the CFS-RAI in the Tanzanian Dairy Value Chain, to name just two of them.

- It continues to be important to document good practices and build on successful experiences, as highlighted by Mr. Sall.
- I encourage you all to contribute to food systems transformation with even more successful examples. We need responsible investments in sustainable food systems.
- Thank you for your attention and I am looking forward to a lively discussion.