



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

171st Session of the Council

(5 - 9 December 2022)

Item 4: Update on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative

Mr Chair,

1. I am honoured to write to you on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States regarding the above-mentioned agenda item for the 171st Session of the FAO Council.
2. The EU and its Member States take note of the latest progress report on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative. We would recall the continued importance of ensuring alignment of the Initiative with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), the joint programming of the UN development system and the 2030 Agenda. To that end, we encourage FAO, in accordance with its mandate, to continue the close coordination of its work on the Initiative with other relevant agencies and developing partners.
3. We note the information on last October's Hand-in-Hand Investment Forum, in particular the overview of the achievements in the various regions. Exploring possibilities for mobilising additional funding and attracting investments is essential for taking the Initiative forward in participating countries. It is critically important to ensure that such investments are duly aligned with the CFS Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems and other relevant CFS policy recommendations and guidelines. In addition, continued attention is needed in order to provide full transparency on the financing and to ensure that the Initiative will have no further impact on the regular agreed budget.

4. We welcome the continued development of the Programme Dashboard, the outsourced development of a Global Communications Strategy as well as the increased number of databases integrated within the HiH Initiative Geospatial platform.
5. To conclude, we thank FAO for the information provided on the Initiative as an additional means of contributing to the achievement of the SDGs within FAO's mandate and ask that FAO continue providing regular updates on the progress made in implementing the Initiative and the results achieved.

Thank you, Mr Chair.
