

PRESS RELEASE: FAO and ACP Countries agree strategic partnership against hunger and malnutrition

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Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, 14 December 2012/ FAO/ ACP: The Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States are to become strategic partners in the fight against hunger and poverty and for the sustainable management of natural resources in the 79-member bloc of countries.

Under an agreement signed yesterday, "FAO and the Secretariat of the ACP Group shall strengthen their collaboration to better address continuing food insecurity and malnutrition, hunger, natural resources management and climate change challenges," said FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva.

On behalf of the ACP Group, Secretary General Mohamed Ibn Chambas said: "Building on existing cooperation, we shall be acting as strategic partners on priority areas for action to bring about freedom from hunger and poverty."

The Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Chambas and Graziano da Silva at the 7th Summit of ACP Leaders in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea from 13-14 December. The ACP Group includes 40 Least Developed Countries and 36 Small Island States.

Graziano da Silva is also representing United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at this event.

Sustainable intensification

Specific areas for collaboration under the FAO-ACP agreement will include promotion of food security; promotion of sustainable intensification of crop and livestock; promotion of fisheries and aquaculture production; food crisis early warning systems; detection and prevention of transboundary plant and animal diseases; disaster risk management; development of improved food products, standards and marketing; food and nutrition education; and promotion of sustainable forest management.

Financial resources for projects under the agreement will be identified and mobilized through funding sources including the European Development Fund, Trust Funds, the Global Environment Facility and other international and national partners.

Graziano da Silva reaffirmed FAO's support to national efforts to move towards more intensive, but sustainable production systems that are resilient to climate change. "In many ACP countries, the processes of climate change are exacerbating the risks already facing people. We see this in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and other parts of Africa, for example," he said.

"The Small Island Developing States of the Caribbean and South Pacific are particularly vulnerable to the rise of sea levels due to global warming. This is leading to a loss of productive land and reducing the resilience of coastal ecosystems," he added.

(Photo: FAO Director General Mr Jose Graziano da Silva and ACP Secretary General Dr Mohamed Ibn Chambas sign a Memorandum of Understanding between the two organisations. Also pictured is Assistant Secretary General Mr Achille Bassilekin III)

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