



**Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations**

***Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally
binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment***

28 November - 2 December 2022

Punta del Este, Uruguay

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Colleagues:

- I am honored to speak on behalf of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.
- The use of plastics in agrifood value chains is pervasive.
- FAO estimates that 12.5 million tonnes of plastics are used annually for crop, livestock production, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture.
- And food packaging adds an additional over 37 million tonnes a year.
- Plastics in agriculture can increase crop yields and production efficiency.
- However, they come with high environmental, economic and social costs from increased pollution.
- To feed a growing population, while addressing climate change, biodiversity loss and ecosystem restoration, agrifood value chains must become more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable.
- This means that plastics used in agriculture must be reduced or replaced and, where there is no alternative, recycled and recovered.
- FAO promotes a holistic and circular approach to plastics management, including microplastics within agrifood systems.
- We promote scientific research to understand the global scope of the problem and food safety issues, and working with the public and private sector to reduce the plastic footprint of specific value chains.

- And we support countries in strengthening their policy response for marking fishing gear, developing bioeconomy strategies, and addressing microplastics pollution in soils and water.
- In consultation with stakeholders, FAO is now starting the process of developing a Voluntary Code of Conduct on the Sustainable Use of Plastics in Agriculture.
- Together with partners and stakeholders, we will support Members to ensure that an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment considers the sustainable management of plastics in agriculture as a part of wider agrifood systems transformation.
- Thank you!