



Speech by State Secretary Elisabeth Backteman at the 40th Conference of the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the UN, 3-8th of July, 2017

- A few weeks ago – 5th -9th of June - Sweden and Fiji hosted the UN Ocean Conference. It specifically targeted SDG 14 Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
- The Conference was a indeed a success. Almost 10 000 participants, 100 Heads of State and ministers (including three from Sweden) as well as key persons such as the Crown Princess of Sweden who is a Sustainable Development Goals Advocate, the UN Secretary General António Guterres and of course Director General José Graziano da Silva took part.
- The Conference has led to over 1300 voluntary contributions including a Swedish contribution of 5,4 million USD to FAO for the implementation of measures to support SDG 14. Closely linked to achieve also the other Global goals.
- The contribution specifically aims at supporting the Port State Measures Agreement and the global Record of Fisheries

Vessels. The funding will also contribute to FAO's ongoing work on discarded fishing gear.

- We find that the PSMA is one of the best ways of combatting IUU-fishing and its harmful economic, social and environmental effects.
- The elimination of unsustainable fisheries subsidies is an important part of SDG 14 and it is of utmost importance that there will be an agreement on appropriate language to honour SDG 14.6 at the next WTO Ministerial in Buenos Aires in December this year.
- I would like to take this opportunity to thank the FAO for its deep engagement in the Ocean conference and for FAO:s constructive collaboration.
- The conference aimed at finding momentum for one of the most complex SDG:s, SDG 14. However, this conference has, in my mind, become something more. [In times of turmoil and doubt] It was proof of the ambitions, and willingness of governments, NGO:s, UN- organisations and other stakeholders, to achieve Agenda 2030 and to fulfil the SDG:s.
- The challenges are many. FAO has, in its reports on the State of Food and Agriculture, given us a presentation of some of the major ones.
- One of the challenges that the Swedish government has given high priority to is the fight against AMR. This is a shared Nordic priority and I would like to support what my Norwegian colleague stated in his speech earlier. FAO is in a unique position to be a game changer in this field. Better

conditions for animals, preventive measures and the use of antibiotics only when needed can take us far in reducing the risks.

- This is why the Swedish government has decided to sponsor a senior expert to FAO in the field of AMR. We are looking forward to a mutually rewarding exchange of expertise.
- Finding ways of feeding the world's growing population and ensuring food security for all, without doing further damage to our environment is one of the most difficult challenges we face.
- But it is not an impossible challenge. There are solutions – some are traditional and based on experience, some are new and innovative. Some are simply based on greater efficiency and care.
- In other words, we have to increase productivity in agriculture in a sustainable way. Essential components to succeed with this are research, field trials, innovation and extension services, but also well-functioning markets, good governance and investments in infrastructure.
- [The Swedish government has just presented a National Food Strategy for Sweden. The most important target is in fact to increase food production in a sustainable way.]
- Offering stable circumstances will attract investments, boost diversification and stimulate new thinking, thus making the agricultural sector a business for the future. This is key in getting the young to engage, [a topic debated in yesterday's ministerial meeting between the EU and the African Union]

- Absolutely crucial is to provide equal opportunities for both women and men. Gender equality is one of the most efficient ways of reaching results in decreasing poverty and increasing prosperity. Providing education for all is at the centre of such an effort.
- Another initiative I would like to mention is the newly established Agroforestry Network. This NGO-driven network based in Sweden aims at increasing knowledge on agroforestry methods particularly in developing countries. FAO's knowledge base and technical expertise is important for the success of the network.
- As part of Sustainable Forest Management, applying agroforestry and planting crops and trees together can lead to decreased poverty as yields increase, it is effective in fighting climate change since trees store CO₂, it can help restore degraded land, combat desertification and halt the loss of biodiversity.
- The effects of climate change and a growing world population means that we need to transition to sustainable ways of producing food, while respecting the environment, the economy and social factors in the process. Cooperation and collaboration between different actors and across sectors is a necessity. Global challenges cannot be tackled alone.

Thank you for your attention!