

Betters for Innovation and Agrifood Systems Transformation

Statement of Permanent Secretary Bryndis Hlödversdóttir, 1st July

I would like to thank FAO for organizing this event, giving us an opportunity to share perspectives and experiences on innovation as a key driver for a much-needed transformation of agrifood systems

Iceland has long relied on science for ocean governance and sustainable management. Our **fisheries management** system is structured to ensure responsible fisheries, focusing on sustainable harvesting and management of marine ecosystems. But in a broader perspective, we are committed to the 30 by 30 goal and we are currently in the process of laying the groundwork for greater conservation in our ocean.

Aquaculture has grown rapidly in Iceland over the last years, creating both opportunities and challenges. Emissions from farmed fish and feed are favourable when compared to other sources of protein, and paired with sustainable energy resources, can create ideal conditions for sustainable food production.

Iceland is committed in the fight against **antimicrobial resistance**. It is important that all nations pull their weight in this fight, as AMR does not respect borders and spreads between countries through humans, animals, feed and food. Therefore, all nations must join the fight with coordinated actions.

Innovation has been transformative, ensuring that materials that previously went to waste are made valuable, once translated into products such as—nutritional supplements, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals.

Advancing the **bioeconomy** in ocean and land has created more jobs, increased revenue, and decreased waste considerably. By investing in research and innovation we can improve food security and produce more and better nutrition.

Inclusion and diversity are equally important. While Iceland ranks at the top of gender equality on world indexes, we are conscious that efforts are still needed to close the remaining gaps. Gender-specific data is collected for the fisheries and agriculture sectors, with the aim to research the position of women within these sectors. Changes have been made in structure of our support system, so two people can be registered for support payments, to make the role of women more visible. We also aim to raise awareness of the status of LGBTI persons in the agrifood sector.

We are proud of our efforts and stand ready to work with FAO and other member states to transform agrifood systems for a more sustainable and inclusive future.

Thank you.