



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

**ECOSOC Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science,  
Technology and Innovation for the SDGs**

**“Session 9: Supporting the implementation of the Technology Facilitation  
Mechanism – the way forward for joint action”**

**Statement by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
Delivered by Ms. Sónia Ricardo Dias, 15 May 2019, United Nations**

Thank you all panelist for the excellent discussions, thank you Mr. Moderator

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Innovation is needed to support the rapid transformation of our food and agriculture systems so that they are more sustainable, resilient and inclusive. Family farmers are also central to this effort. There are more than five hundred seventy (570) million family farms in the world and they operate about 75% of the world’s agricultural land.

The United Nations General Assembly called upon FAO and IFAD to lead the implementation of the United Nations Decade of Family Farming (2019-2028).

In this context, FAO organized The first International Symposium on Agricultural Innovation for Family Farmers: Unlocking the potential of agricultural innovation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, that took place in Rome in November 2018.

This Symposium was attended by over five hundred and forty (540) participants, including representatives from 92 member countries and other key stakeholders in agricultural innovation.

It shed light on the importance of agricultural innovations for achieving the SDGs and recognized the central role of family farmers as custodians to produce enough, safe and nutritious food in a sustainable manner.

As a follow-up of the symposium, FAO is currently developing a:

- **Coordination mechanism to streamline the work on innovation in food and agriculture systems for achievement of SDGs.**
- **addressing the recommendation and request of the 2019 Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFFA):**
  - a) to Draw up the framework of a multi-stakeholder International Digital Council;

**And, this year FAO, is organizing a High-Level Seminar on Digital Agriculture Transformation: the challenges to be addressed (it will be held in Rome on the 12-13 June 2019)**

And will present initial results related to the impact assessment of the opportunities and risks presented by digitalization for agriculture and rural areas.

**The main outcome will be a framework document to leverage agriculture through digitalization in rural areas.**

We look forward to your participation.

Thank you for your attention.