**

***Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation***

***Inter-ministerial Committee for Human Rights***

***Reply pursuant to HRC resolution 50/9 of 7 July***

***2022 entitled “Human Rights and Climate Change”***

***December 2022***

**

**Reply pursuant to HRC resolution 50/9 of 7 July**

**2022 entitled “ Human Rights and Climate Change”**

Following the request from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Italian authorities are pleased to provide the following contribution.

On a general note, as far as **climate change** in Italy on 31 December 2019, the final text of Italy's National Integrated Plan for Energy and Climate (*Piano Nazionale Integrato per l’Energia e il Clima* – PNIEC) was sent to the EU Commission with a 2030 timeline: it is intended to implement a new energy policy that ensures full environmental, social, and economic sustainability and accompanies this transition. The EU Commission approved it on 14 October 2020 (SWD(2020)911 final). The Plan is closely related to the projects envisaged in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan and will require its updating in 2023.

Within the **national legislative framework**, it is worth of mentioning the proposed constitutional law approved on 8 February 2022 by the Italian Parliament: it includes the protection of the environment, biodiversity and ecosystems among the fundamental principles of the Italian Basic Law, amending Articles 9 and 41 and directly affecting the Special Statutes of Regions and of the Autonomous Provinces of Trento and Bolzano.

Article 9 is one of the fundamental provisions of the Basic Law: it already envisaged the protection of the national landscape and historical and artistic heritage, extending it to the environment, biodiversity and ecosystems; the amendment to Article 41, on the other hand, states that health and the environment are paradigms to be protected by the economy, on a par with security, freedom and human dignity; it further enshrines how institutions, through laws, programmes and monitoring activities, can direct public and private economic initiative not only towards social but also environmental ends.

Concerning comprehensive **policies** in action, to achieving the new target set by the EU Council in December 2020, as part of the Next Generation EU, the key policy to respond to the pandemic crisis caused by Covid-19 is the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP), adopted on 30 April 2021 and designed to make Italy a fairer, greener and more inclusive country, with a more competitive, dynamic and innovative economy.

In the view of its implementation, a call for proposals was launched on 15 July 2022 to finance targeted interventions under the 'Health-Environment-Biodiversity-Climate' programme of the National Plan for investments which is complementary to the NRRP.

The interventions are aimed at defining a new institutional setting for health-environment-climate issues capable of strengthening the National Health System through a holistic One Health approach. The aim is to strengthen the health protection of citizens against currently known risks and looming environmental-climate challenges and to support sustainable development and safe economic growth, especially in relation to the green transition and digital transformation.

The call funds 14 programmes divided into two macro-areas; as for AREA A - priority programmes for the health system several activities refer to the nexus climate change – food:

1. Prevention and reduction of health risks related to indoor air pollution

2. Prevention and reduction of health risks linked to outdoor air pollution

3. Prevention and mitigation of risks to populations within environmentally critical areas, safe and sustainable land and waste cycle management; risk communication and citizen outreach approach

4. Universal access to water: safely managed water supply and sanitation, healthy human use and reuse of water, coastal, marine environments

6. Reduction of direct and indirect risks to human health associated with climate change

7. **Hygiene, resilience and sustainability of primary production and food chains as a whole with respect to environmental-climate risks**

8. Promotion of health-environment-climate in the early stages (first 1000 days, infant and maternal-infant) of life.

At the national level proper **mechanisms and tools** have been put in place to **measure the climate change impact on access to basic resources – food included**.

Climate change affects agro-ecosystems making impossible to maintain and recover their functionality. The vulnerability of agricultural systems to the increased frequency of extreme events will depend on their resilience and adaptability. Specific impact, adaptation and mitigation studies are needed for productive areas to support national policies. Agrometeorology and modelling play a key role in the definition of robust analysis methodologies for the development of decision support systems at both national and regional levels.

To tackle this challenges, the Council for Research into Agriculture and the Analysis of Agricultural Economics (*Consiglio per la ricerca in agricoltura e l'analisi dell'economia agraria* - CREA) has carried out a research aimed to develop an innovative portfolio of analysis and monitoring services in agriculture, also taking advantage of the new opportunities provided by the Copernicus Programme, for better spatial and time-based solutions. This study will facilitate the quantitative assessment, for example, of greenhouse gas emissions in agriculture and related risks of harmful biological phenomena through a set of chemical, biological and microbial, agro-climatic indicators.

Finally, as for the intervention of the **development cooperation**, Italy – with its long-standing leadership on agriculture and food security, and in relation to the outcomes of the FAO Summit on Food Systems in 2021 – has contributed to the proposal for a ‘Food Coalition’ among member countries. The initiative aims to create a web of support that targets both cooperation projects to mitigate the effects of the food crisis triggered by Covid-19, particularly in fragile communities, and the deployment of experts from member countries, who can assist FAO experts in developing guidelines for all governments on how to manage the challenging post-Covid-19 era. The ‘Food Coalition’ not only aims to tackle the impact of the pandemic, but also to promote resilient and sustainable food production systems, improve nutrition, and increase agricultural productivity and the incomes of smallholder farmers - especially farms run by women and young people.

Development cooperation efforts will focus primarily on the least developed and most vulnerable countries, which depend on predominantly pastoral and small-scale fishing economies, family-run and with a low degree of technological innovation. However, they will also prioritise the development of agribusiness and the agricultural processing industry, and the use of non-conventional water sources. The primary focus will be on promoting diversified and ecologically sustainable food production, emphasising the link between nutrition and health. There will be special emphasis on crops with higher nutritional value and/or greater resilience to climate change, ensuring the continuity of food, supply and distribution chains, and securing the livelihoods of small-scale farmers, cattle farmers and fishermen. Seeds, livestock feed, tools, and veterinary care, as well as the strengthening of social protection systems, will be key areas. Targeted actions will be taken to counter the discrimination faced by women food producers in areas such as access to land, information, credit and technology. Such actions affirm the gender approach adopted by Italian Cooperation in specific programmes and across the board (Cf. “Guidelines on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls 2020 - 2024”).

Italy’s outstanding organisations in the area will be involved, such as the aforementioned Council for Research into Agriculture and the Analysis of Agricultural Economics (CREA), a research body overseen by the Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies (MIPAAF). The subject areas identified for collaboration with MFAIC are: (i) sustainable agriculture in terms of circular-economy principles, spreading knowledge of climate-resilient farming practices, biodiversity preservation, and sustainable management of natural resources; (ii) food security, introducing technologies and standards for improving food production and quality, sustainable processing and conservation of local natural resources, and reducing food waste; (iii) technical and scientific training as part of specific development projects. CSOs and other stakeholders working in the agricultural sector and the fight against hunger and malnutrition will be involved, with the ability to create synergies on the ground in other areas, such as education, training and social activities.