



ETAT DE FRIBOURG
STAAT FREIBURG

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Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems, Grangeneuve, 28.04.16

Speech by Ms Marie Garnier, President of the Government of Fribourg

Madame Ambassador,
Director Villarreal,
Director Lehmann,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great honour and a genuine pleasure to welcome you to the Canton of Fribourg and, more precisely, to the Grangeneuve Institute of Agriculture.

I am delighted to see that so many of you responded to our invitation to debate the implementation of the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems, issued by the Committee on World Food Security. I would particularly like to thank those individuals who have agreed to make their own contributions to this forum:

- Amira Gornass, President of the Committee on World Food Security,
- Paul Bulcke, CEO of Nestlé,
- Gaëlle Bonnieux, Head of Agriculture Debt Financing at responsAbility,
- Ramon Esteve, CEO of ECOM Agroindustrial,
- Fritz Glauser, a Board Member of the World Farmers' Organisation,
- Andreas Schriber, CEO Biovision
- René Buholzer, Head of Public Policy at Credit Suisse
- and Christian Jörg, SALIC and Director of the Commodity Club Switzerland.

Food security and nutrition will be two of the most pressing issues facing the world in the coming decades. Climate change, growing populations, conflicts and migration are exacerbating the problem. Land in Africa and the far north is coveted, large corporations are acquiring resources at cutthroat prices, intensive palm oil production is destroying ecosystems and overfishing is emptying our oceans.

In this context, it is vital that the agricultural and agri-food industries develop a sustainable, responsible approach in order to guarantee the availability, access, stability and use of our food resources – and it is in this spirit that the FAO has drafted its Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems. These non-binding principles, adopted in 2014, must not remain mere words on a page.

It is now time for each State to put them into practice with the support of the FAO, as well as that of agricultural organisations, consumer organisations, agri-food companies, the finance industry, NGOs and researchers.

Together, we must find the best tools to implement these principles on the ground, both locally and globally, and that is the aim of this forum. It is an aim that is particularly dear to my heart as Director of Agriculture for the Canton of Fribourg. I strongly believe in vertical interaction between the global context and our everyday lives.

That is why we chose to invite you here, to the Grangeneuve Institute of Agriculture. This institute has trained and advised generations of farmers, cheesemakers and food technicians. In cooperation with its neighbour Agroscope, it also tests new techniques and mechanical equipment with the aim of reducing workloads and the industry's environmental impact. This mission of training and outreach has been rooted in Grangeneuve for almost a thousand years. The institute was erected on the grounds of the Hauterive Abbey.

The Cistercian monks, who settled not far from here on the banks of the River Sarine, were true pioneers who cleared and enriched the land. The rural monks' ingenious planning allowed them to excel at exploiting the earth and natural resources, so that by the 14th century their property had become a network of model farms producing wine, wool, meat, fish and grains.

It is my hope that the Hauterive monks will inspire us today to work together to find the tools and methods we need to apply the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems to our daily activities – for the common good and for that of our planet. Let us be creative, leave behind established knowledge and frameworks, and cast our minds into the future.

Grangeneuve is a little off the beaten track, but sometimes you need to make a detour to save some time and find the right solutions.

Let us hope for a fruitful forum!