ARTICULATING FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND FOOD SECURITY-RELATED CHALLENGES FACED BY THE WORLD TODAY URGENTLY REQUIRE COLLECTIVE ACTION. Global food production will have to increase by 60 percent by 2050 in order to feed the growing global population and ensure food security for all. In addition, this increased production must happen in a sustainable manner to protect the world’s already scarce natural resources—soil, land, water, and ecosystems—from further depletion and degradation. Increasing sustainable agricultural production will require continuous research and development (R&D) for new technologies and innovations in climate-smart agriculture (CSA). Developing these technologies and bringing them to scale, however, will require significant financial investment from both the public and the private sectors, as well as an open and efficient agricultural trade system.

RECOMMENDED PRIORITIES FOR THE 2018 G20 TOOLS TO FACE THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

Global food production will have to increase by 60 percent by 2050 in order to feed the growing global population and ensure food security for all.
THE T20 TASK FORCE ON FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE HAS PRODUCED A SERIES OF BRIEFS HIGHLIGHTING THE NEED FOR THIS COLLECTIVE ACTION.

BRIEF 1

THE ROLE OF TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE INTENSIFICATION TO ACHIEVE GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY WITH LESS CARBON EMISSION AND MORE CARBON SEQUESTRATION

To both ensure sustainable food production and achieve the carbon emissions targets set in the Paris Agreement, global agricultural production will need to be restructured. Specifically, we will need to expand sustainable intensification of agricultural production, particularly in more productive areas of the world, in order to lower carbon emissions per unit of product. This will require strong international collaboration through the G20 to develop, promote, and finance a global sustainable intensification strategy. A liberalized agricultural trade system will play a key role in this strategy by helping to address the growing geographical imbalances between food production and food demand.

BRIEF 4

MONITORING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY FOR SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND R&D PLANNING

The global community needs appropriate tools to monitor sustainable agriculture’s productivity gains, identify countries and sectors lagging behind, and commit R&D efforts accordingly to tackle the challenges ahead. One key tool is a proper measure of agricultural total factor productivity (TFP), which will help to avoid a serious underestimation—based on a too-optimistic view of recent productivity trends—of the investments needed to ensure sustainability. We need to look beyond the standard measure of productivity to understand the technologies and policies needed to ensure that productivity is not increased through the sacrifice of scarce natural resources. An international consortium should monitor agricultural TFP to provide international comparisons and track performance over time. In addition, the G20 should acknowledge and address the issue of sustainable productivity measurement and should support more in-depth research into the relationship between agricultural TFP and agricultural R&D.

BRIEF 5

FINANCING “A SUSTAINABLE FOOD FUTURE”

This brief focuses on one of the multiple interventions needed to create sustainable food systems that generate growth and inclusion and provide healthy diets: the mobilization of financial resources to support investments by producers (particularly by small and family farms) in scaling up the use of climate-smart agriculture (CSA) technologies and innovations. A project preparation and financial structuring facility of appropriate scale could help leverage scarce public sector funds to help mobilize the much larger pool of private investors that may be interested in supporting these activities but that now lack adequately structured projects and investment vehicles to do so.

THE LINKS BETWEEN AGRICULTURE, CLIMATE CHANGE, PRODUCERS, POVERTY AND FOOD SECURITY, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY ARE VARIED AND COMPLEX. Therefore, these problems need to be addressed with a comprehensive global vision that will allow us to finance the development and utilization of key technologies for increasing agricultural productivity in a sustainable way.