

Les «Lignes Guide» du Gouvernement visent à inspirer aussi bien les mesures immédiates pour stimuler et soutenir le développement des entreprises que les initiatives législatives à moyen et long terme pour renforcer la compétitivité et soutenir le rôle multifonctionnel de l'agriculture, en favorisant ainsi son renouvellement structurel et générationnel; ceci en harmonie avec les exigences sociales et du territoire: ces Lignes soutiennent aussi les objectifs de l'emploi et du travail dans le Sud.

Les «Lignes guide» de politique agricole démarrent tout d'abord de la réforme de l'Administration de l'agriculture et fixent un parcours qui va privilégier principalement, sept directions finalisées:

**Mise en valeur de la politique agricole italienne dans le cadre de l'Union Européenne;**

- 1. politique pour l'orientation compétitive;**
- 2. politique pour le développement de la multifonctionnalité;**
- 3. politique pour la mise en valeur du «Made in Italy»;**
- 4. politique pour l'organisation de l'offre;**
- 5. politique pour la formation et l'emploi;**
- 6. politique pour l'innovation.**

Le préambule d'un programme aussi important est évident : transférer l'agriculture d'un secteur isolé vers un système intégré et rendre visible et de plus en plus compétitive l'agriculture italienne, qui figure parmi les premières dans la production mondiale et qui développe une dimension économique d'environ 300 mille milliards.

On retrouve ces lignes de politique agricole aussi dans la partie du document de programmation économique, et financière pour l'année prochaine , qui a été approuvé dans ces jours par notre Gouvernement.

Le document fait état de l'engagement du Gouvernement pour la relance et la nouvelle considération, dans une vision projetée avec les parties sociales, de la politique du secteur agricole, agro-industriel et de la pêche, finalisée à la modernisation des structures et à des capacités d'entrepreneurs et compétitive du système du marché

européen et international, ainsi qu'à l'adaptation de la réforme de la politique agricole commune.

L'action du gouvernement va se concentrer sur la décision à prendre sur quelques réformes de base de la politique agricole et sur certains choix plus généraux sur le renouvellement d'infrastructures et service de base (transports, crédit, énergie, etc.) qui conditionnent l'organisation agricole. De buts prioritaires pour l'action du gouvernement seront, dans ce cadre général, l'augmentation de l'emploi, en particulier des jeunes et le développement des zones pauvres du territoire. En particulier, les lignes de programmation seront sur : la réforme du Ministère pour les Politiques Agricoles et des institutions qu'il contrôle ; le développement et la coordination du système d'information de l'agriculture, comme soutien des choix de politique générale ; l'amélioration de la capacité de dépense des ressources disponibles, utilisées qui ne sont pas informatisées.

All. 2

**REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE**  
**Follow-up to the World Food Summit**

The above mentioned documents contain a large synthesis of the main issues in the agenda of international fora which deal with food safety and food consumption safety. Secondly, a review of the main recent actions is illustrated, especially at international level, in order to improve the health and sanitary level offered to consumers and to facilitate the trading of food agriculture products; and this through a framework of rules as clear and transparent as possible.

Concerning the production standards, on a national scale, in the last years many European Union directives, aiming at an harmonisation, have been received; in particular, the legislative procedures have dealt with the checking of food products (D.L. 123/1993), nutritional labelling (D.L. 77/1993) and food products hygiene according to model HACCP (Risk analysis and checking of critical points) (D.L. 155/1997).

In 1997 an inter sectorial Commission worked for the definition of a number of national targets for a nutritional policy; most of them have been included in the Health National Plan for 1998-2000; among these targets is the reduction of obesity. This Commission set the guidelines for the settlement, in the Local Health Units, of the Service for food products hygiene and Nutrition, with the aim of monitoring the nutritional and consumption safety characteristics of products.

The nutritional control has registered some further progress; in particular, a pilot monitoring system will soon be started, based on secondary data, in two Italian regions (Lazio and Lombardia). This system will allow, among other things, for the training of specialised personnel for control. In 1997 the National Institute for Nutrition published the new Guidelines for a correct and healthy Italian Nutrition - which is now being spread - the new Tables of products' Composition, and it has been active in the evaluation of the risk linked to the consumption of genetically modified organisms, of additives' ingestion and, in general, of the new production technologies.

Always speaking of nutritional policy, recently a bill has been introduced. In this framework The National Institute for Nutrition seems the natural reference point for the Ministry for Agriculture Policy. The Ministry for Agriculture Policy, as far as it is concerned, is examining a proposal for the institution of a national Food Agency. This will be a body with technical and political character, which will act as an independent reference point for consumers and producers in their aim to reach targets of food health, consumption safety, and quality. The tasks of the agency should include both the different phases of the food productive chain (production, processing, distribution), and the consumption with its repercussions for the public health. The National Institute for Nutrition, because of its interdisciplinary tasks on food, can act as a scientific support in the work of this agency.

The above mentioned national initiatives on consumption safety and nutritional policy are consistent both with principles fixed by the Summit, and with the activities and direction of the European Union in this field. The latter has promoted an Action Plan for the period 1996-1999, aiming at improving information and transparency for consumers; within this initiative a particular importance is given to problems regarding food.

On a European scale, numbers of initiatives have been financed by Italy on food safety in PECO countries and in the Balkan regions; the National Institute for Nutrition took part in the FAO/ILSI workshop on the Nutritional Guidelines for PECO countries and to number of activities of technical assistance in the field of nutritional evaluation in the same countries and in the area of the former USSR (Bulgaria, ex-Yugoslavia, Armenia).

As for the standard and the management of the risk linked to the product intake, Italy supported the works of Codex Alimentarius, both hosting the conferences - mentioned in the documents - and the FAO/WHO advisory groups, both through the participation of national experts in the technical commissions. In particular, the National Institute for Nutrition contributes, through the participation of its experts, to the works of numbers of commissions.

All. 3

**REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE****Changes in food and agricultural commodity consumption patterns in the  
Region: the role of the consumer vis-à-vis the producer - towards a common  
approach to quality.**

The document 98/4 is very interesting and topical, in fact it stresses the problem of food consumption safety; an item which is very influential in the Society. A review of the main recent actions is illustrated, especially at international level, in order to improve the health and sanitary level offered to consumers and to facilitate the trading of food agriculture products; and this through a framework of rules as clear and transparent as possible.

These issues are very important to Italy as a country exporting agricultural and food products of high quality - from a healthy and a taste point of view. Italy can make profit from the recent harmonisation of production standards and from the setting of food policies aiming at protecting consumers' health and a fair trade.

Concerning the production standards, on a national scale, in the last years many European Union directives, aiming at an harmonisation, have been received; in particular, the legislative procedures have dealt with the checking of food products (D.L. 123/1993), nutritional labelling (D.L. 77/1993) and food products hygiene according to model HACCP (Risk analysis and checking of critical points) (D.L. 155/1997).

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Always speaking of nutritional policy, recently a bill has been introduced, providing the establishment of a National Council for Food and Nutrition. There has been also the passing of the National Plan for Nutrition. The project was prepared by the Ministry of Health and provides for the collaboration of the Minister of Health and the Minister for the Agriculture Policy with numbers of public and private bodies. The Ministry for Agriculture Policy, as far as it is concerned, is examining a proposal for the institution of a national Food Agency. This will be a body with technical and political character, which will act as an independent reference point for consumers and producers in their aim to reach targets of food health, consumption safety, and quality. The tasks of the agency should include both the different phases of the food productive chain (production, processing, distribution), and the consumption with its repercussions for the public health.

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On a European scale, I would point out the participation of the National Institute for Nutrition in the FAO/ILSI workshop (International Life Science Institute) on the Nutritional Guidelines for PECO countries and the many activities of technical assistance in the field of nutritional evaluation in the same countries and in the area of the former USSR (Bulgaria, ex-Yugoslavia, Armenia).

At last but not least, I wish also to mention the Codex Alimentarius, whose works Italy has always supported, both hosting the conferences - mentioned in the documents - and the FAO/WHO advisory groups, both through the participation of national experts in the technical commissions.

Concerning food safety, the rules taken by Commission for the Codex are the main reference in order to evaluate the conformity of the SPS agreement (about sanitary and phytosanitary measures) of each national health measure. The same importance is given to the texts of the Codex, regarding the requirements of labelling quality and structure, nutritional aspects and the test methods for the application of TBT agreement (technical obstacles for trade). The latter deals with measures aiming at safeguarding consumers from economic frauds and from misleading procedures.

In order to meet a so important status of Codex during the trade and international quarrels inside WTO, the Commission for the Codex Alimentarius will reconsider the procedures and the content of the work which has been made and planned, so that it will be possible to assure a new consistency and efficacy to its own activities.

This greater importance means not only the need of a greater, representative and justified participation of countries, involving everybody but first of all the Developing countries and those in the transition process, but it means also that there are greater difficulties when agreements on particularly controversial matters must be achieved.

FAO has a particularly important experience to be employed in the technical co-operation also in Europe, among the others FAO has to develop the activities aiming at promoting works of the Codex and at creating national bodies responsible for these activities. The participation in the Codex works will be, in fact, productive and efficacious only if we are able to represent the particular needs of the Country and if we will take into account the needs of everybody, producers and consumers. And, of course, this is an engagement which is valid for all the European Countries, and first of all for ours.

**CONFÉRENCE RÉGIONALE POUR L'EUROPE****Utilisations et avantages des informations pédologiques dans le contexte régional européen.**

La FAO représente depuis toujours une institution de référence pour ce qui concerne l'élaboration de lignes directrices et des méthodologies originelles pour la description des sols en fonction de leur conservation et utilisation.

A présent, en relation aussi avec la conscience de plus en plus répandue du caractère limité et de la fragilité des sols européens, d'après ce qu'il ressort du document en considération, la FAO souligne l'opportunité, sur tout le continent européen et probablement dans ses proximités,

- de procéder à la création d'une base de données pédologique harmonisée et pouvant être utilisée pour la formation de politiques et mise en oeuvre d'interventions sur l'environnement (il faut rappeler que depuis longtemps déjà les cartes pédologiques peuvent être reproduites automatiquement de la base de données) :

de promouvoir effectivement de programmes d'application des données harmonisées pour des politiques agricoles compatibles, surtout dans les pays à faible revenu et déficit alimentaire de la région.

En ligne de principe, nous pensons qu'il ne peut y avoir aucun frein de la part de l'Italie pour adhérer aux lignes directrices fixées ; les sols nationaux sont mis en danger par la " consommation " de terres, attribuable à des produits de différente utilisation, de l'énergie déchargée par les machines à disposition, de la pollution provoquée par l'industrie, de l'immission de substances chimiques causée par l'agriculture, de l'érosion, de la réduction des substances organiques, du salinage etc.

L'information sur les sols est fondamentale et stratégique. Sans aucun doute, la dégradation du sol est l'un des aspects les plus préoccupants dans la protection de l'environnement. A cela on peut ajouter que la dégradation physique du sol est parfois plus grave que la dégradation chimique (pollution du sol) ; en plus, elle est souvent sous-estimée ou identifiée seulement comme érosion du sol. En réalité, des aspects de dégradation tels que l'action de compacter, la formation de croûtes, la présence d'une semelle de labour, la perte de structure etc. sont aussi graves même s'ils sont ignorés. La dégradation du sol ne cause pas seulement une perte de la production agricole, comme l'on affirme au point 7, mais aussi à une réduction des possibilités de choix de culture, à une augmentation des imputs d'énergie et économiques et très souvent à une diminution de la qualité des produits.

L'aspect le plus délicat concerne l'accès et l'harmonisation des données (points 22-29). Pour ce qui est de l'accès aux données, à présent l'Italie n'a pas une politique sur la propriété des données ; la plupart des données à disposition en matière pédologique sont obtenues à travers des financement publics, mais avec le processus de privatisation en cours, les données deviennent de plus en plus la propriété de ceux qui les possèdent (par exemple : Soil Survey Institute, Silsoe, Angleterre). L'harmonisation des données est absolument nécessaire au moment où en Europe l'on assiste à une multiplication des Centres qui se proposent pour la collecte et la gestion des données pédologiques de façon souvent non coordonnée.

Cependant, il faut rappeler aussi qu'au cours des dernières années l'on a constitué l'European Soil Bureau, qui est déjà opératif ; il fait partie de l'Agricultural Information Systems Unit au près du Space Application Institute de la D.G. Joint Research Centre à Ipra.

L'un des buts principaux de ce Bureau est la définition -- dans le cadre communautaire et si possible dans toute l'Europe -- de règles standardisées pour l'enquête et la documentation pédologique, étant donné que parmi les pays partenaires et souvent dans un seul pays, les données à disposition ne peuvent pas

être comparées parce qu'elles sont collectées et gardées avec des méthodes différentes.

L'Italie, à travers le Comité pour l'Observatoire Pédologique de ce Ministère, participe activement aux activités du Bureau communautaire dont elle suit les indications méthodologiques.

A présent, dans notre pays l'on va bien tôt amorcer un programme de cartographie pédologique standardisée à l'échelle 1 :250.000 qui coûtera dans les deux premières années 24 milliards de liras (un peu moins de 12 millions d'Ecu) ; ce programme représente sans doute l'initiative de connaissance pédologique principale qui va être amorcée en Europe, qui nous placera parmi les nations les plus évoluées dans ce secteur.

Avec ces remarques préliminaires et avec la conviction et le souhait que l'activité et les potentiels de Ipra augmentent d'avantage au fil du temps, avec la considération la meilleure pour les réalisations de la FAO, l'on est pourtant convaincus que l'Union Européenne, et le continent européen plus en général devront faire référence et respecter les directives provenant des institutions communautaires qui sont de façon plus ou moins directe, le produit des souhaits, des opportunités et des études exprimés et conduits dans le continent tout entier.

Je voudrais ajouter quelques mots sur l'importance de la défense du sol (au sens large; incluse la lutte aux processus d'érosion accéléré et aux phénomènes de dégradation hydrogéologique) même dans le domaine des forêts et en particulier dans les bassins de montagne. Ces derniers comprennent même l'aménagement des torrents et la protection des versants par l'érosion , donc ils sont particulièrement efficaces pour la conservation de la sous-couche de la pédogenèse et de la pédocouche en formation.

Ces activités deviennent très importantes dans le contexte des conditions de l'environnement et du climat de la Méditerranée, où le processus de dégradation, surtout dans certaines zones du Sud du pays, peut évoluer facilement vers des

conditions de pre-désertification, en concomitance avec des facteurs naturels et anthropiques fortement négatifs (pâturage excessif, activités agricoles dans des zones instables, pollutions, gaspillage de ressources hydriques etc.).

Le levé préliminaire des caractères et des conditions des sols constitue donc l'un des éléments les plus importants et essentiels pour l'organisation correcte des différentes actions ; à cela il faut ajouter une activité constante de monitoring de l'évolution des différents profils pédologiques (avec les relatifs relèvements) afin d'opérer, le cas échéant, d'éventuelles corrections ou des interventions supplémentaires.

Par conséquent, la base essentielle pour toute activité est la disposition et l'élaboration d'une cartographie pédologique à l'échelle adéquate ; elle doit comprendre, entre autres, des indications spécifiques et des évaluations concernant les conditions actuelles du sol, la présence éventuelle d'un processus manifeste de dégradation plus ou moins intense et sa cause.

Même dans ce contexte, l'Italie, pour organiser de façon efficace et correcte ses interventions, est particulièrement intéressée (en donnant aussi sa contribution) aux efforts accomplis aux niveaux international (FAO, UE, etc.) et national, pour l'élaboration des cartographies adéquates à plusieurs échelles.

All. 5

**REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE**  
**Report on FAO activities in the European region 1996-97: activities of the**  
**statutory bodies concerning directly the European region**

We examined the Document ERC/98/2 , which shows the hard work FAO made in the Eastern European Region in order to assist the former east block countries in their transition process from a mainly centralized agriculture to a market economy one.

We congratulate FAO for all actions taken in the pedological activities. In particular, we agree with the decision taken in the meeting experts, held in Warsaw on March 1997. We consider a fundamental matter to develop the agriculture credit, the strengthening and the development of co-operation and renovation of farm mechanization .

Now I wish to mention the activities in the forestry field as described in the major program 2.4 -forestry - at the beginning stresses how forestry activities in Europe are led by FAO European Forestry Commission and by ECE Timber Committee and their subsidiary structures. Moreover the matters which have been worked out with priority dealt with: supply and demand of products and services originating from forests; up-date of inventories of forest resources in developed countries; statistics on production and trade concerning forests, their industrial processing and the health status; promotion of the durable forestry management.

This activity has pointed out the co-ordination between the two international bodies, which have worked very well together, without getting entangled.

However, Italy has always been present and active both in the Committee of Sylva Mediterranea, and in the Forest Committee, and in the World Forest Congress (Antalya in Turkey)

We wish, also, to remind the activity Italy developed in organizing the second of the two intergovernmental consultations: the first one was in Scotland- Aviemore (April 1996) - and the second one in Italy -Trento (October 1996).

In particular, as for the operational activities Italy supports different kind of initiatives, aiming at developing forests of Eastern countries which have more need of help: that is the intervention that gave rise to the Plan of forest action in Cyprus, and the survey involving 10 countries of the European Community in order to study more adequate methods for the durable management of private forests.

In particular, we dwell on the importance to improve communications among the different members and to update the research network through a particular study on products and services of the Mediterranean forest.

All. 6

**OPENING SPEECH OF SENATOR MICHELE PINTO  
MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE POLICY**

On October 16<sup>th</sup>, all over the world, the World Food Day will be celebrated. Every year, it marks the anniversary of the FAO Foundation, which took place in Quebec in 1945.

The theme FAO has chosen for 1998 is "Women feed the world". It has been decided in order to stress, in a specific way, the great contribution women have given to family and to food security in each country.

This year too, my Ministry, within the celebration prepared by the Italian National Committee for the World Food Day, has organized a reflection meeting on the theme chosen by FAO.

The great actuality and the great interest of the subject, that we are called to go into thoroughly, are manifested by data the FAO has published; they point out that more than a half of cultivated foodstuffs are the fruits of women work; in particular, in rural areas women are completely responsible for nutrition of their children, and they are also the main actors of production and preparing food for their families. It is always women that spend a lot of their income on the purchase of additional food for the family.

In numbers of regions, rural women provide for the great part of labour necessary to the agriculture works, from the soil preparation to the harvest; and they are responsible for the post-harvest work, because their husbands have to migrate to urban areas looking for income-generating opportunities.

From the FAO point of view, women, despite the great contribution to food security they give through their work, remain unjustly absent not only in the development, but also in the political and social sphere, because of social law structures penalizing

them. This fact causes an illiteracy which is greater among women than among men; moreover, in a lot of world regions women have not the ownership of lands, even if they cultivate them. This has caused an increase of 50% in the number of women who live under the threshold of poverty, versus 30% of men.

However, this "invisible actor in the development scene", as she is described by FAO, has a role of great importance not only for food security and for the social-economic development of countries, but also for the survival of our planet.

I think that it is enough to mention only two examples, but they are very significant, to state the above mentioned sentence: the responsibilities of women in the use of water resources, and also in the conservation of biodiversity.

Women, particularly in rural areas, have a deep knowledge and play an important role in water management. They are managers of water in the household: from drinking water to that necessary for preparing food, for bathing and washing, for livestock. Women have a better knowledge than men in the location, reliability and quality of local water resources. They collect, store and control the use and the sanitation of water.

The same can be said for the specific knowledge women have of natural resources useful for the daily household needs: wild plants, trees, wild and domesticated animals.

The 1992 "Convention on biological diversity" has affirmed the necessity to efficaciously protect and use women knowledge about local communities, their practices and innovations, including those used for traditional medicine, biological diversity and local technologies. Moreover it was stressed the necessity to assure, consign, improve, and hand down, in an ecologically rational way, this knowledge. The same idea has been confirmed in the Action Programme of the World Conference on Women (Peking 1995) and in the 1996 Rome Declaration.

Naturally all this will not minimize the importance of a better professional training and a greater women involvement in the agriculture research.

Unfortunately, women are greatly absent at all policy and decision making levels in the fields of management, conservation, protection and regeneration of natural and environmental resources. Their experience and skill of defending and controlling the correct use of resources are very often neglected by the decisional power, by training institutes and by bodies operating in environmental protection at high level.

It is also true that after a lot of years of initiatives, finally both in national and international institutions, new approaches to increase women's involvement in the fields of economy and agriculture research are emerging.

Also in developed countries, where successful steps have been made for women equality, the rural women are still the main responsible for the hard works of household, which are not well remunerated and whose social and economical value is not rightly considered. Still now, because of their engagement in these activities, there is a women's poor representation in the most important decision making sphere, and this comes after two centuries of struggle for equity, after about 20 years from the signature of the United Nation Convention for the elimination of every kind of discrimination towards women and after all the other international initiatives we have already mentioned.

Still today, women who are agriculture engineers, experts of forestry or specialists of land management, of sea science or of environmental jurisprudence are very few.

Therefore, because of the great interest for the subject FAO has chosen for this World Food Day, the "Women in the Government": On. Rosy Bindi, Minister of Health; On. Anna Finocchiaro, Minister for Equal Opportunities; and Sen. Patrizia Toia, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, with great sensitivity and responsibility, have accepted my invitation to probe into the chosen item. And it is for this reason that I wish, also on behalf of all the participants, to thank them.