

TOPIC 2: AIM for Climate

SPEAKING ELEMENTS

- Since its launch at COP26 last year, AIM for Climate has gained in momentum and in visibility.
- It is encouraging that our common pledge and those of other Government Partners will make it possible for the overall investment figure to be doubled already after one year. I am proud that the 750 million Euro Research & Innovation spending for this period represent an important contribution to the overall amount raised.
- Apart from attracting and showcasing significant amounts of investment, AIM for Climate is playing an increasingly important role also in bringing together the relevant players from around the world, including governments, businesses, philanthropy, academia, and other parts of civil society.
- Unfortunately, I could not participate myself in the Ministerial meeting in Dubai in February, due to other institutional obligations here in Brussels on that day. I am looking forward to your invitation to next year's AIM for Climate ministerial meeting in the US. Any information that you can already share on this will be welcome.
- Perhaps there will be an opportunity to meet some of the colleagues already at the UN Climate Conference of the Parties (COP) in November. Do you know whether Secretary Vilsack is planning to be there?

DEFENSIVES

Is the European Commission going to increase its contribution to AIM for Climate's investment target?

- Given that the Commission joined AIM for Climate only after COP26, in December 2021, we trust that our R&I investment pledge of 750 million € that we communicated in February this year counts towards the new target that will be announced at COP27. That figure already constitutes a significant increase over what was spent on these issues in previous years.
- As our R&I work programme and budget for 2023 and 2024 are still in the process of being negotiated internally, we are not in a position to communicate updated figures prior to COP27. Despite many important issues competing for attention, it is relatively safe to assume that R&I funding related to agriculture and climate will continue at similar levels for the coming years.

BACKGROUND

- The Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate (AIM for Climate, or AIM4C) is a voluntary initiative launched by the United States and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in the context of the UNFCCC COP26 in Glasgow in 2021. It gathers participants in support of increasing and accelerating **agriculture and food systems innovation in support of climate action**.
- AIM for Climate has three more specific **objectives**:
 - Increase investment in agricultural innovation for climate-smart agriculture and food systems, by at least 4 billion USD over the years 2021 to 2025;
 - Enable coordination and collaboration;
 - Increase cooperation.

Those objectives are consistent with the Commission objectives on agriculture and food R&I as part of Horizon Europe. In particular, the Commission supports coordination and cooperation at global level on R&I related to climate change.

- In the **US administration**, AIM for Climate is coordinated by the Department of Agriculture (Chief Scientist's office, [Art. 4.1b Privacy]) with support from the State Department (climate envoy [Art. 4.1b Privacy]).
- The **European Commission** became a Government Partner of AIM for Climate in December 2021 (letter to UAE and USA of 7 December 2021). In that context, the Commission communicated the decision to dedicate 750 million € to R&I in the area of agriculture and climate, through the Horizon Europe work programmes for 2021 and 2022, mainly from HE Cluster 6 and the Soil Mission.
- US and UAE have announced their intention to increase the **funding target** from 4 to 8 billion USD, on the occasion of COP27 in Egypt in November. The 750M € pledged by the Commission will already count towards this increased target, given that this pledge was made only after COP26.
- AIM for Climate is also planning several other activities around COP27, including to present some of its "innovation sprints". An **innovation sprint** is "an increase in aggregate self-financed investment from non-government partners to achieve an outcome/output in agriculture innovation and for climate-smart agriculture and food systems to be completed in an expedited timeframe". Around a dozen innovation sprints have been launched so far, concentrated in four focus areas: smallholder farmers in low- and middle-income countries; methane reduction; emerging technologies, and agro-ecological research.
- There are currently 41 AIM4C **Government Partners** in total, including nine EU Member States (DK, ES, FI, HU, IE, LT, NL, RO, SE). The initiative by now also has some 200 **Knowledge Partners** and **Innovation Sprint Partners**, including some other initiatives in which the Commission is involved (e.g. the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases, GRA).
- AIM4C **meetings** held so far with Commission participation:
 - First ministerial meeting on 21 February 2022 in Dubai, AGRI represented by then-Director A, Mr Tassos Haniotis.

- Meetings of Government Partners on 16 December 2021, 31 January 2022, 24 May 2022, 11 August 2022 (all online).
 - Meeting of all Partners (incl. non-governmental) on 24 August 2022 (online).
- A **second ministerial meeting** will be hosted by the US and is tentatively planned for spring 2023.