

# Opening Remarks by Vice President William Lai

*Opening remarks delivered at the inaugural Animal Welfare and Food Transition Forum on January 10, 2022*

Good afternoon to Environment & Animal Society of Taiwan Chief Executive, Wu Hung, Carrefour Foundation CEO, Marilyn Su, Legislative Yuan, Legislator Su Chiao-Hui and special guests, experts, scholars and media colleagues in attendance.

Today, I am delighted to have been invited to participate in the 2022 Animal Welfare and Food Transition Forum presented by the Environment & Animal Society of Taiwan, Carrefour Foundation and Jane Goodall Institute Taiwan.

Firstly, I would like to thank colleagues from industry, government, academia, research and civil society groups for your dedication and commitment to improving animal welfare, promoting humane farming, tending to food production ethics, and pursuing environmentally sustainable development.

I also hope that this forum will provide an opportunity to share initiatives and experiences in humane agriculture and sustainable food from Taiwan and abroad and allow Taiwan to strengthen links with the international community, stay ahead of the curve, and deliver on the concept of One Health, One Welfare for humans, animals and the environment.

In 2019, to achieve its 2050 carbon neutrality goal the European Union announced the European Green Deal with the hope of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and halting the continued depletion of biological and environmental resources, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

In May 2020, as part of the European Green Deal the European Union launched the Farm to Fork Strategy to develop a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system. To improve the welfare of farmed animals and promote healthy and sustainable food consumption patterns, the European Union will review and amend its animal welfare regulations and provide consumers with greater access to information relating to healthy eating, empowering consumers to select foods that are kind to the environment and animals.

In Taiwan, the Council of Agriculture has progressively formulated definitions and guidelines for animal-friendly egg, pig and milk production systems since 2014. In 2019, the Council of Agriculture launched Taiwan's first Animal Welfare White Paper to encourage innovation in scientific research, uphold the value of respect for life, improve animal welfare and protect animals through a comprehensive regulatory system and foundational education. Under this clear animal welfare policy blueprint, I hope that government and civil society can work in concert towards a proactive, collaborative and innovative animal-friendly society.

Of course, I know that the pioneers of animal protection with us today hold greater expectations for the government's actions, and Taiwan still has much room for improvement when it comes to promoting environmental sustainability and improving animal welfare in comparison to advanced nations like the European Union. This is the very reason for holding today's forum. As I mentioned previously, Taiwan should emulate advanced nations such as the European Union. There is a need for an

inclusive green development strategy that considers environmental justice, an economically just transition and social inclusion. This strategy must not only help us to reach our target of carbon neutrality by 2050, but also establish Taiwan as a beautiful nation in which people, animals and the environment interact harmoniously.

Different sectors cannot work alone to achieve these goals; government and civil society must work together in partnership. Achieving environmental sustainability cannot be limited to energy, transport and manufacturing. Rather, we must embrace the concept of multi-disciplinary collaboration. Only by incorporating the agricultural sector – including the livestock sector – in planning and integration can Taiwan truly become a compassionate and sustainable nation.

Due to your enthusiastic advocacy and the efforts of successive governments, Taiwan can point to substantial progress and achievements in regard to environmental sustainability, in respect to its actions and legal framework. However, we must do better.

I hope that through today's forum we can attract even more individuals and organizations to join the discussion and act together to create an environmentally- and animal-friendly Taiwan.

Lastly, I hope that today's forum is a complete success, and wish all guests health and happiness.

Thank you all.