



**One planet**  
eat with care

Sustainable  
Food Systems



Ministerio de  
**Agricultura y  
Ganadería**  
DE COSTA RICA

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra  
Swiss Confederation  
Federal Department of Economic Affairs,  
Education and Research EAER  
Federal Office for Agriculture FOMG



# THE TRANSFORMATION WE NEED

**EMERGING FROM GLOBAL CRISES BY SHAPING  
SUSTAINABLE, RESILIENT, HEALTHY, AND INCLUSIVE  
FOOD SYSTEMS**



**PROCEEDINGS DOCUMENT OF THE 4TH GLOBAL  
CONFERENCE OF THE ONE PLANET NETWORK'S (10YFP)  
SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS (SFS) PROGRAMME**

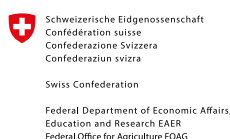


# THE TRASFORMATION WE NEED

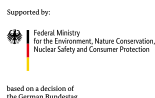
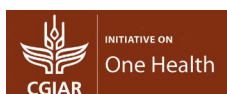
## Proceedings Document of the 4th Global Conference of the One Planet network's Sustainable Food Systems Programme

Emerging from global crises by  
shaping sustainable, resilient,  
healthy, and inclusive food systems

### ORGANIZERS



### SUPPORTED BY



---

Copyright One Planet network Sustainable Food Systems (SFS) Programme, 2023

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part and in any form for educational or non-profit purposes without special permission from the copyright holder, provided acknowledgement of the source is made. The SFS Programme would appreciate receiving a copy of any publication that uses this publication as a source. No use of this publication may be made for resale or for any other commercial purpose whatsoever without prior permission in writing from the SFS Programme.

Disclaimer

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the SFS Programme concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city, or area, or of its authorities, or concerning delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Moreover, the views expressed do not necessarily represent the decision or the stated policy of the SFS Programme and its members, nor does citing of trade names or commercial processes constitute endorsement.

©Copyright One Planet network Sustainable Food Systems (SFS) Programme, 2023



---

# TABLE OF CONTENTS:

---

<b>Acronyms</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Background .....	10
About the Sustainable Food Systems Programme.....	11
<b>Agenda</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Main sessions</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Session 1: Opening and setting the scene.....	12
Session 2: Rethinking the global architecture for food systems.....	14
Session 3: Revisiting national and sub-national governance and policies .....	16
Session 4: Changing consumption and production patterns .....	18
Session 5: Promoting the transformation through science, finance, human rights and innovation.....	20
Session 6: Strengthening the UN Food Systems Summit's ecosystem of support .....	22
Session 7: Measuring transformation.....	24
Session 8: Dialogue of National Convenors .....	26
Session 9: Conclusions and closing ceremony.....	28
<b>On-site side events</b> .....	<b>30</b>
Side event 1: Clustering industry towards sustainable food systems transformation in Viet Nam .....	30
Side event 2: Food systems pathways: a holistic approach for accelerating implementation.....	31
Side event 3: Guiding multistakeholder collaboration for sustainable food systems transformation.....	31
Side event 4: Local-based strategies to sustain food systems targeting household food and nutrition security in Viet Nam .....	32
Side event 5: How to move food systems transformation from theory to policy: the case of Viet Nam.....	32
Side event 6: Connecting the dots: How can the National Biodiversity Strategies and Actions Plans and the UNFSS pathways help implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework at the country level and accelerate food systems transformation? .....	34
Side event 7: Cities and local governments accelerating cohesive and inclusive food systems transformation .....	35
Side event 8: Deforestation-free agricultural commodity production and trade.....	36
Side event 9: True cost accounting in action: creating roadmaps to measure and drive food systems transformation.....	37
Side event 10: Harnessing the potential of agroecology in Southeast Asia to transform food systems to become sustainable .....	38
Side event 11: Inter-regional ministerial roundtable on digitalization for food systems transformation in Ha Noi, Viet Nam .....	39
<b>Virtual Side Events</b> .....	<b>40</b>
Virtual side event 1: Modernizing mindset and operating models for food system actors.....	40
Virtual side event 2: Transforming territories: the approach of organic districts as living laboratories for inclusive sustainable food systems.....	40
Virtual side event 3: Report launch: Who's tipping the scales? Rebalancing power for democratic food system governance .....	41
Virtual side event 4: Urban and peri-urban agriculture for resilient, sustainable and inclusive food systems: multiple benefits of urban and peri-urban agriculture for the transformation of urban food systems.....	42
Virtual side event 5: Short circuits of healthy and sustainable food retail that oppose the global syndemic of obesity, undernutrition and climate change .....	43
Virtual side event 6: Multistakeholder collaboration for more sustainable food systems in the Mediterranean.....	43
Virtual side event 7: Pursuing win-wins for nutrition and the environment through a food systems approach : lessons from cities and their surroundings.....	44
<b>Annexes</b>	
Annex 1: Outcome Document.....	46

## ACRONYMS

<b>10YFP</b>	The 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns
<b>AGRA</b>	Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa
<b>CARE</b>	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
<b>CFS</b>	Committee on World Food Security
<b>CGIAR</b>	Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research
<b>CIAT</b>	International Center for Tropical Agriculture
<b>CIFOR-ICRAF</b>	Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry
<b>CIHEAM</b>	International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies
<b>CIRAD</b>	French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>FOAG</b>	Federal Office for Agriculture of Switzerland
<b>GAIN</b>	Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition
<b>GBF</b>	Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
<b>ICLEI</b>	International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development
<b>IFC</b>	International Finance Corporation
<b>IFPRI</b>	International Food Policy Research Institute
<b>IICA</b>	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
<b>IPES-FOOD</b>	International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems
<b>IPSARD</b>	Institute for Policy and Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development
<b>HLPF</b>	High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
<b>MARD</b>	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Viet Nam
<b>NBSAPs</b>	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
<b>NNS</b>	National Nutrition Strategies
<b>NSAF</b>	Nutrition-sensitive agri-food systems
<b>OPN</b>	One Planet network
<b>PRIMA</b>	Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area
<b>RUAF</b>	Resource Centre on Urban Agriculture and Food Security
<b>SCP</b>	Sustainable Consumption and Production
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>SFS</b>	Sustainable Food Systems (Programme)
<b>SFS-MED</b>	Sustainable Food Systems in the Mediterranean
<b>WWF</b>	World Wide Fund for Nature
<b>UNCTAD</b>	UN Conference on Trade and Development
<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNFSS</b>	United Nations Food Systems Summit
<b>UNIDO</b>	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
<b>UPA</b>	Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture
<b>VAAS</b>	Vietnamese Academy of Agricultural Sciences
<b>ZH NAP</b>	Zero Hunger National Action Programme

---

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The conference was the result of a joint effort under the coordination and responsibility of the One Planet network's (OPN, or 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns - 10YFP) Sustainable Food Systems (SFS) Programme.

Our special thanks go to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Viet Nam (MARD) for generously hosting the 4<sup>th</sup> Global Conference of the SFS Programme, as well as the Programme's Co-Leads, including the Federal Office for Agriculture of Switzerland (FOAG), the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Costa Rica for the overall organization of the conference.

We also greatly appreciate the efforts of the broader organizing committee and the session organizers, composed – in addition to MARD and the SFS Programme Co-Leads – of the Alliance of Bioversity International and International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), Asian Farmers Association for Rural Development, Food Action Alliance, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), One Planet network (10YFP) Secretariat, Project X, Rikolto, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth, United States Department of Agriculture, UN Nutrition, and the World Benchmarking Alliance.

Many thanks to those who regularly participated in the organizing committee's work, in particular Nguyen Do Anh Tuan, My Binh Bui, Vu Hong Anh, Michael Mulet, Brent Loken, Patrick Mink, Ella-Mona Chevalley, Mark Lundy, Tuyen Huinh, Giorgia Patarnello, Chiara Villani, Ma Estrella Penunia, Adam Gerstenmier, José Valls Bedeau, Jacopo Schuerch, Siobhan Kelly, Charlotte Flechet, Nicole De Paula, Lina Mahy, Ludovica Nesbitt, Sarah Faber, Marina Bortoletti, Carmen Torres, Denise Costa Coitinho, Viktoria de Bourbon de Parme, and Rayan Kassem.

The conference would not have been possible without the active contributions of all speakers, panellists, chairpersons, side event organizers, rapporteurs and drafting committee members, and of course the lively interactions of all participants.

Furthermore, we would like to express our thanks to all organizations that contributed financially to the organization of the conference, including the Governments of Australia; Canada; the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection; Ireland; Switzerland and the United States; as well as the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD), FAO, the One Planet network Secretariat, Oxfam, Rikolto, UNDP, the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and WWF.

Finally, we extend our special thanks to Brett Shapiro for the editing and to Simone Mari for the layout and design of the conference proceedings.

This proceedings report was made possible thanks to the technical support of FAO and the financial contribution of FOAG.





---

# INTRODUCTION

On 24-27 April 2023, more than 350 participants gathered in Ha Noi (Viet Nam) with the aim **to make a substantial contribution to the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit's (UNFSS) follow-up process up to 2030**. Participants included ministers and vice-ministers from eight countries representing four world regions, other members of the One Planet network, National Convenors and other actors involved in the UNFSS follow-up process, as well as multiple stakeholders from all over the world. The conference built upon the outcomes of the UNFSS, and the expertise and tools of the Sustainable Food Systems (SFS) Programme as well as the outcomes of the Programme's previous three global conferences. In this way, the conference functioned as a major milestone towards the [UN Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment](#) organized by the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub (24–26 July 2023).

The **objectives** of the conference were to:

- **Present transformational actions**, tools and initiatives that have emerged since the UNFSS, with a view to promoting their uptake and upscaling in national and local policy-making processes;
- **Further promote the food systems approach and inclusive governance** and collaboration at all levels – including multilateral engagements and particularly Rio Conventions – to foster their uptake for the development of multisectoral action plans towards sustainable consumption and production in food systems; and
- **Provide a space** for National Convenors, UNFSS coalitions and other relevant multi-actor initiatives, as well as other food systems actors, **to build capacities and deepen their collective efforts towards sustainable food systems pathways**, in view of the UNFSS 2023 Stocktaking Moment.

The conference looked at successes and opportunities as well as main barriers and bottlenecks concerning food systems transformation, with a focus on five key levers of change:

- Global, regional, national and subnational inclusive governance to lay the foundation for applying a holistic/integrated approach towards sustainable and healthy food systems;
- Collaborative, multisectoral, integrated policies based on a holistic approach to advance the transformation we need: improving consumption and production patterns in our food systems;
- Mobilizing means of implementation, including science, finance, human rights and innovation;
- Monitoring and accountability frameworks to measure transformation, supported by metrics and data; and
- Research and innovation, including in collaboration with the private sector.

When discussing these key levers of change, the conference participants:

- Shared experiences and identified specific needs and actionable solutions in support of the National Pathways for Food Systems Transformation, as further summarized in this document;
- Recalled the call from the 2021 UNFSS to mainstream the food systems approach – a holistic approach towards more sustainable, resilient, inclusive and equitable food systems, delivering nutritious and safe foods for healthy diets while considering all relevant causal variables of a problem and all social, environmental and economic impacts of the solutions;<sup>1</sup>
- Further recalled the Secretary-General's Chair Summary and Statement of Action on the UNFSS, which called on Member States to drive action at country level in their local contexts, including through mechanisms that develop and implement National Pathways to 2030 that are inclusive and consistent with countries' climate commitments;
- Further recalled the Ministerial Declaration of the 2022 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), calling upon all actors to implement the voluntary commitments of the UNFSS, including the National Pathways and coalitions of action, as appropriate, building on regional and national priorities and respecting national policies and priorities; as well as the 2022 HLPF Ministerial Declaration recognizing the One Planet network as an important implementation mechanism for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and calling upon all stakeholders to adopt a sustainable food systems approach to promote sustainable consumption and production;
- Further recalled the Ministerial Declaration of the United Nations Environment Assembly at its fourth session, where Member States affirmed they will “promote sustainable food systems by encouraging the implementation of sustainable and resilient agricultural practices, improving value generation, and significantly reducing waste and energy use along the food supply chain to help ensure food security and ecosystem functions and services”; Further recalled the 2021 G20 Matera Declaration, emphasizing the need for collaborative multisectoral action to strengthen and support resilient and sustainable health, social protection and food systems, and address risks emerging from the human–animal–environment interface.

---

<sup>1</sup>For definitions of the terms “sustainable food systems” and “food systems approach”, refer to: Sustainable Food Systems Programme. 2020. Towards a Common Understanding of Sustainable Food Systems. Available at: [https://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/sites/default/files/sfs\\_programme\\_glossary\\_towards\\_a\\_common\\_understanding\\_of\\_sfs\\_2020.pdf](https://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/sites/default/files/sfs_programme_glossary_towards_a_common_understanding_of_sfs_2020.pdf) (Accessed: 27 April 2023)

- Further recalled the 2022 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Agricultural Ministers Declaration, emphasizing the urgent need for a transformation towards more sustainability and resilience to address the triple challenge facing agriculture and food systems – ensuring food security and nutrition for a growing global population; addressing environmental challenges, including climate change and biodiversity loss; and providing opportunities for livelihoods for all farmers, including family farmers, and others employed along food supply chains;
- Further recalled the final communiqué of the 2023 Global Forum on Food and Agriculture, in which ministers committed to promote sustainable, inclusive, efficient and resilient food systems by enabling the agriculture and food sectors to produce sustainably, adapt to new conditions, enhance their ability to deal with risks, close the inequality gap, and recover quickly and better from crises.
- Further recalled the Report of the 50<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), in which members called for leveraging the convening power of the CFS to strengthen coordinated global policy responses to the multiple dimensions of the global food crisis; and  
Stressed the urgency to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the SDGs by 2030, the Paris Agreement, and the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), highlighting the important contribution that the implementation of National Pathways for Food Systems Transformation can make in this regard.

**The following three overall conference conclusions were highlighted throughout the different sessions of the conference:**

- 1 The importance of food systems transformation for coping with multiple challenges:**  
Sustainable, resilient, healthy and inclusive food systems are urgently needed and are a precondition to address the interrelated crises of food insecurity, malnutrition, health, climate change, biodiversity loss, conflict, and high energy and consumer prices.
- 2 The need to link short-term and long-term efforts:**  
While it is sometimes necessary to take short-term action to tackle multiple crises, such action should be conducted in the framework of a long-term strategy and a holistic and inclusive approach to food systems governance and policy making.
- 3 The need for inclusiveness, participation and meaningful collaboration at all levels:**  
Food systems transformation is a whole-of-society task that requires engagement and effective participation of all actors across all sectors, leaving no one behind.

## Background

Over one-third of the Earth's habitable land supports agriculture, providing livelihoods for nearly half the world's population. Between 21 and 37 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions are traceable to our food systems, driven primarily by deforestation, land-use change, and land management activities. According to the UNEP/Chatham House, "Agriculture is the single largest cause of land-use change and habitat destruction, accounting for 80 percent of all land-use change globally." Global food systems leave approximately 828 million people (one in ten) affected by hunger, and more than 3 billion people cannot afford a healthy diet. About two-thirds of the extremely poor live in rural areas, where most food is produced. There is an urgent need to build sustainable food systems that are healthy for people and the planet, as put forth by the UN Secretary General's convening of the first Food Systems Summit in 2021. The UNFSS generated unprecedented awareness and momentum regarding the pivotal role sustainable food systems play in achieving the SDGs and to limit warming to 1.5° Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Through the UNFSS emphasis on dialogue and multisectoral plans, over 100 countries developed National Pathways for Food Systems Transformation, the foundation for the necessary transformative action we need. A few months later, in June 2022, and in acknowledgement of the successive multiple interrelated crises (the 4 Cs: COVID-19, high costs, new conflicts, and climate change) that have exacerbated the dire challenges that were already afflicting our society, the Stockholm+50 international meeting stated that a healthy planet may require a review of the way our current economic system works, including by defining and adopting new measures of progress and human well-being, supported by economic and fiscal instruments and multisectoral policy action that account for the value of human health and the environment. This unprecedented new background calls for ever more urgent transformative action at scale, requiring countries to deliver on Food Systems Transformation National Pathways and related commitments, which will be accounted for in the first UNFSS Stocktaking Moment in 2023. The 4th global conference of the SFS Programme will take place before the stocktaking Moment, contributing to its preparations and building momentum by providing early signals of progress towards the transformation we need.

## About the Sustainable Food Systems Programme

The [SFS Programme](#) is a multistakeholder partnership that aims to accelerate the transformation towards sustainable consumption and production patterns in all areas related to food, with a special focus on promoting a holistic food systems approach in policymaking.

The SFS Programme is part of the One Planet Network (10YFP), the UN-mandated mechanism to foster Sustainable Consumption and Production (SDG12). The SFS Programme currently has over 190 members worldwide, bringing together leading organizations from governments, the UN system, civil society, the scientific community, and the private sector. The Co-Leads of the SFS Programme are Costa Rica (Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock), Switzerland (Federal Office for Agriculture), and WWF, and they are supported by a 23-member Multistakeholder Advisory Committee.

The SFS Programme played an active role in the preparatory process of the UNFSS that took place in September 2021. Among other activities, it organized the [1<sup>st</sup> Global Food Systems Summit Dialogue](#) as part of the [3<sup>rd</sup> global conference of the SFS Programme](#), and several of its members chaired the UNFSS action tracks as well as the development of the multistakeholder action coalitions that came out of the UNFSS.

Currently, the SFS Programme aims to support the processes established by the outcomes of the UNFSS, including by making its tools readily available to coalitions and countries in support of the National Pathways for Food Systems Transformation, and by providing a space for co-creation and exchange among the different UNFSS coalitions, other relevant initiatives, National Convenors, and the wide range of actors that share the vision on sustainable food systems. The [newly adopted UN Global Sustainable Consumption and Production \(SCP\) Strategy](#) foresees that the UN One Planet network and the broader SCP community support the UNFSS follow-up process, including through the leadership of the SFS Programme.

## Agenda

Time (GMT+7)	Mon 24	Tue 25	Wed 26	Thu 27
9:00-9:30		<b>Session 4</b> Changing consumption and production	<b>Learning journeys</b>	<b>Session 8</b> Dialogue of National Convenors
9:30-10:00				
10:00-10:30	<b>Session 1</b> Opening	<b>BREAK</b>		<b>BREAK</b>
10:30-11:00				
11:00-11:30		<b>Session 5</b> Transformation levers		<b>Session 9</b> Closing
11:30-12:00	<b>LUNCH</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>	
12:00-12:30				
12:30-13:00				
13:00-13:30				
13:30-14:00				
14:00-14:30	<b>Session 2</b> Global architecture food systems	<b>On-site side events</b>	<b>Session 6</b> Ecosystem of support	
14:30-15:00				
15:00-15:30				
15:30-16:00	<b>BREAK</b>	<b>BREAK</b>	<b>BREAK</b>	
16:00-16:30	<b>Session 3</b> Governance and policies		<b>Session 7</b> Measuring transformation	
16:30-17:00				
17:00-17:30				
17:30-18:00	<b>BREAK</b>	<b>BREAK</b>	<b>BREAK</b>	
18:00-18:30	<b>Virtual side events</b>	<b>Virtual side events</b>	<b>Virtual side events</b>	
18:30-19:00				
19:00-19:30				
19:30 onwards	<b>Sustainable gala dinner</b>		<b>Vietnamese cultural dinner event</b>	

## MAIN SESSIONS

This section provides an overview of the conference's nine main sessions,<sup>2</sup> as summarized by session chairs and rapporteurs. The conference sessions were conceived with the aim to make a substantial contribution to the UNFSS follow-up process up to 2030, in view of the first Stocktaking Moment taking place on 24–26 July 2023.

The key messages are addressed primarily to high-level political leaders, decision-makers and business leaders, but also to food systems stakeholders at large who are involved in the development and implementation of National Pathways for Food Systems Transformation.

### Session 1: Opening and setting the scene

#### Moderator

Ms. Imelda Bacudo, Coordinator for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Resilience Network

#### Speakers

- H.E. Tran Luu Quang, Deputy Prime Minister, Viet Nam
- Ms. Estrella Penunia, Secretary-General, Asian Farmer's Association
- Mr. Qu Dongyu, Director-General, FAO
- H.E. Lê Minh Hoan, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Viet Nam
- H.E. Victor Carvajal Porras, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Costa Rica
- H.E. San Vanty, Secretary of State, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Cambodia
- H.E. Ildephonse Musafiri, Minister of State, Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Rwanda
- H.E. Meles Mekonen, State Minister for Agriculture, Ethiopia
- H.E. Samuel Kawale, Minister of Agriculture, Malawi
- H.E. Christian Hofer, State Secretary for Agriculture, Switzerland
- H.E. Saboto Caesar, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry & Labour, St. Vincent and the Grenadines
- Mr. Joao Campari, Global Food Lead, WWF

#### Summary

The session set the stage for the conference by providing stark reminders of the multiple, interrelated challenges and recent crises, and calling for the urgent transformation needed to achieve sustainable food systems by 2030. The speakers emphasized the rising hunger crisis and the challenges faced in meeting the SDGs on time, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. They further highlighted the detrimental effects of climate change, including extreme weather events, on family farmers and the negative impacts of COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crises.

Key points discussed included the inadequate coordination among various actors responsible for agriculture, fisheries, forestry, nutrition, and the environment. Family farmers were found to have limited representation in policymaking and lacked access to essential resources such as land, markets, finance and technology. The speakers stressed the importance of holistic solutions and the need to address governance through principles of inclusion in order to implement systemic actions.

The newly created National Pathways were highlighted as effective tools for progress, and Cambodia, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Malawi, Rwanda, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Switzerland, and Viet Nam shared their experiences in developing their pathways. These countries focused on various aspects, including sustainable production, nutrition, food loss, climate resilience, and youth engagement.

Closing remarks emphasized the urgency of taking systemic, transformative action. The speakers emphasized the need to bridge the ambition gap, the transformation gap, and the implementation gap to ensure that meaningful actions are prioritized and effectively implemented with the support of the right partners and policy processes.

#### Key takeaways<sup>3</sup>

- There is unprecedented interest in solving food systems issues because decades after agreeing on the “Right to Food,” we are nowhere near our SDG goal to end hunger, of halting biodiversity loss, or our target of limiting global warming to 1.5° Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

<sup>2</sup>The recordings of the main sessions are available on YouTube and can be accessed through these links: [Session 1](#); [Sessions 2 and 3](#); [Sessions 4 and 5](#); [Sessions 6 and 7](#); [Sessions 8 and 9](#).

<sup>3</sup>The key takeaways of this session are based on the notes of the co-leads of the SFS Programme and not necessarily agreed upon by the drafting committee (composed of session chairs, organizers and rapporteurs).



- We face many obstacles to achieving sustainable food systems. Many actors have inadequate coordination for the design and implementation of the integrated policies needed to transform food systems.
- We need food systems that are healthy, nutritious, sustainable, inclusive, just and equitable.
- Small-scale farmers are critical to food systems transformation, but receive a fraction of needed support.
- Remedies must be holistic. Achieving SDG2 (zero hunger) must go hand in hand with achieving a range of other SDGs, and therefore requires rethinking the governance of agrifood systems. Progress has been made in implementing the “food systems approach” in some parts of the world; we need to learn from the progress made to date.
- Calling for a holistic approach implies addressing governance – family farmers, their businesses and their cooperatives call for inclusive governance processes.
- Political will to transform food systems requires legislative change. But even when there are legislative changes, government budgets to implement are lacking.
- We need to close the ambition gap: National targets need to be informed by science in order to be ambitious enough.
- We need to close the transformation gap: Countries need to prioritize meaningful actions, such as the Paris Agreement nationally determined contributions, and not low-impact actions.
- We need to close the implementation gap: The right ecosystem of support needs to be built with the right partners working together.



## Session: 2 Rethinking the global architecture for food systems

### Moderator

Mr. Jamie Morrison, Senior Advisor, Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)

### Speakers

- H.E. Ambassador Gabriel Ferrero, CFS Chairperson (video message)
- Mr. David Cooper, Acting Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity Secretariat (video message)
- Mr. Pedro Manuel Moreno, Deputy Secretary-General, UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (video message)
- Ms. Caterina Ruggeri Laderchi, Director, Food Systems Economic Commission
- Mr. Juan Lucas Restrepo, Director General, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT, and Global Director of Partnerships and Advocacy, CGIAR
- Ms. Su McCluskey, Special Representative for Australian Agriculture
- H.E. Christian Hofer, State Secretary for Agriculture, Switzerland

### Summary

The purpose of this session was to showcase the transformational power of coherent and holistic policies – from the global to the local level – by providing an overview of global policy processes that shape food systems, directly and/or indirectly, at national and subnational levels. The session aimed to discuss the need to mainstream food systems in the Rio Conventions and other relevant multilateral agreements, as well as other issues, such as the implications on sustainable food systems of the current trade regime and the Stockholm+50 call to rethink the global economic model.

The session featured the perspectives from a number of key global policy processes and multilateral bodies that shape our food systems, such as the CFS, CBD, GBF and UNCTAD. While looking at how global governance processes and frameworks can support food systems transformation at national and subnational levels, the session also included cases (e.g. from Australia and Switzerland) on how national agriculture and food systems policies are taking into account global policy processes in areas such as climate, biodiversity and trade.

Speakers discussed the need to address fragmentation as one of the key challenges for a more coherent and inclusive governance of food systems. Concrete examples were provided to highlight the need for more integrative and holistic policymaking that involves different ministries and implies breaking out of sectoral silos at both global and national levels. The importance of creating a better alignment between national and international policies, while rethinking the global governance architecture for food systems, was stressed. Finally, panellists reflected on the key ingredients to unlock the transformational power of food systems-related policies in the current context of multiple crises.

### Key messages<sup>4</sup>

- The current global governance architecture for food systems is fragmented, as it has grown over time and in the absence of a systems lens. The future global governance architecture needs to be rethought in order to consider a food systems approach.
- To avoid unintended consequences, global policy instruments should be implemented at the national level with a coherent and holistic perspective.
- Trade can be supportive of sustainable and resilient food systems, by creating global market opportunities and enhancing food security, particularly for countries that rely on imports. However, trade liberalization can also bring new trade-offs, such as a decline in local production and longer supply chains.
- Investments in sustainable food systems should become part of the standard portfolios of financial institutions. The National Pathways should be used as a basis for anchoring investment expectations to help shift global finance towards food systems transformation.
- Both nationally determined contributions of the Paris Agreement and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) of the GBF should consider a food systems approach and include ambitious targets, reaching from production to consumption.

<sup>4</sup>The key messages of sessions 2 to 9 were drafted and agreed on by the drafting committee (composed by session chairs, organizers and rapporteurs) and published in the Outcome Document of the Conference – Annex 1.



- The UN Food Systems Coordination Hub acts as a catalyst and connector inside the UN system to support countries in translating their commitments into effective actions to reach sustainable food systems by 2030.
- As an inclusive intergovernmental policy forum on food security and nutrition, the CFS and its HLPF have a role to play in ensuring coherence, coordination and policy convergence across the different global policy processes that shape food systems at national and subnational levels.
- Through its new Global Strategy on Sustainable Consumption and Production, the One Planet network provides a UN-backed multistakeholder platform that links to the Rio Conventions and other relevant multilateral processes.



©/MARD Viet Nam

## Session 3: Revisiting national and sub-national governance and policies

### Moderator

Ms. Corinna Hawkes, Director, Food Systems and Food Safety Division, FAO

### Speakers

- Ms. Corinna Hawkes, Director, Food Systems and Food Safety Division, FAO
- Mr. Nguyen Do Anh Tuan, Director General of the International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Viet Nam
- Mr. Edward Walugembe, National Food Systems Coordination Committee Chairperson, Commissioner Strategic Coordination and Implementation, Office of the Prime Minister, Uganda
- Mr. Tom Arnold, Special Envoy on Food Systems (2021–2022), Ireland
- Ms. Evelin Best, Lead of the Solidarity Food Project, Cooperativa Obrera
- Ms. Christine Campeau, Global Advocacy Director, Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE)
- Mr. Ta Van Tuong, Deputy Director, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ha Noi, Viet Nam
- Ms. Marina Bortoletti, Associate Programme Officer, UNEP

### Summary

The session provided an overview of the political economy of food systems, with a strong emphasis on the complexity of governance challenges and the importance of inclusive and effective multistakeholder collaboration (MSC) mechanisms as a key transformational force towards sustainable food systems.

The panel discussion highlighted numerous challenges related to cross-sectoral and multi-actor collaboration, such as the requirement for time, patience, consensus and effective management of power relations. Examples of these challenges were presented, including Uganda's struggle to involve the private sector in the National Food Systems Coordination Committee and Ireland's efforts in reaching agreements and compromises within the Agri-Food Strategy Stakeholder Committee. Additionally, private sector and civil society organizations encountered obstacles to expanding their networks, engaging communities in MSC processes, promoting food systems thinking, and accessing financial resources.

While acknowledging these complexities, participants underscored the indispensability of MSC mechanisms and advocated for their widespread adoption. They emphasized that such collaborations enable actors that worked in isolation to connect, fostering the development of shared visions, clarity of roles and responsibilities, and collective efforts to overcome interconnected challenges.

Cross-sectoral and multistakeholder partnerships have different forms, need to be fit for purpose, and are needed at national and subnational levels. Several successful examples were shared, such as Viet Nam's cross-ministerial collaboration in preparation for the UNFSS and for the One Health partnership, Uganda's efforts in promoting joint programming and planning among ministries, and Ireland's public consultation and dialogues for the development of the new agrifood strategy. The key role played by civil society in facilitating inclusive dialogues was also highlighted.

Lastly, the session stressed the importance of support networks, shared learning, capacity-building and investment to ensure the effectiveness and longevity of MSCs.

### Key messages

- Inclusive multistakeholder governance collaboration, in all its different forms and levels, is essential to ensure integrated policymaking in the face of our joint and urgent goal to meet the 2030 Agenda for all, and to address the environmental crises that are worsening inequalities in food systems.
- In most parts of the world, adoption of a systemic policy framework that considers interrelated environmental, economic, and social outcomes of food systems is still a pending task, and it requires sustained awareness-raising and capacity-building.
- At the same time, there are an increasing number of countries and cities that are promoting MSC mechanisms (e.g. food councils or committees, food dialogues) as a way to move towards a food systems approach and to create food strategies or actions that simultaneously benefit food security, environmental and socioeconomic goals. Good practices include the presence of a champion, as well as the provision of funding and institutionalization of these mechanisms for their sustainability in the long term.



- Coordination among and active participation of different government departments and various food systems players, both horizontal and vertical, are essential to achieve a shared vision. Success of this participatory process requires dedicated resources, in particular time, patience, data, and long-term funding.
- Multilevel governance may require national governments to develop regulatory and legislative reforms that support decentralized governance and strengthen coordinated decision-making on food systems.
- Effective leadership is paramount for fostering multi-actor engagement. Funding and institutionalization of multi-actor mechanisms are key to prevent and manage power imbalances and conflicts of interest.
- Decision-making mechanisms should include well-defined procedures to build the trust, accountability, transparency and confidentiality needed for managing diverging views and priorities and reaching agreements.
- Meaningful participation of stakeholders who have often been excluded from policymaking processes, such as Indigenous Peoples, small-scale farmers, women, youth, and informal food systems workers, is essential and needs dedicated procedures, advocacy and capacity-building mechanisms for them to articulate their knowledge, concerns and needs, and to make sure they are taken into account.
- Supporting the private sector on a sustainability journey is central to MSC.



## Session 4: Changing consumption and production patterns

### Moderator

Ms. Imelda Bacudo, Coordinator for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Resilience Network

### Speakers

- Ms. Rebecca Shaw, Chief Scientist and Vice President, WWF
- H.E. Yaw Addo Frimpong, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Ghana
- H.E. Sok Silo, Secretary General, Council for Agricultural and Rural Development, Office of the Council of Ministers, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, and National Convenor, Cambodia
- Mr. Dao The Anh, Vice-President of the Vietnamese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (VAAS), Viet Nam
- Mr. Ply Pirom, Project Manager Sustainable Consumption and Production, WWF Future Food Together Initiative, WWF-Thailand
- Mr. Robert Cole, Regional Advisor on Responsible Agricultural Investment, Mekong Region Land Governance project
- Mr. Ulf Jaeckel, Head of Division, Sustainable Consumption and Production, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection, Germany

### Summary

This session explored how global, regional and local initiatives that link consumption and production through systemic approaches can trigger sustainable food systems transformation, including in the context of the renewed global partnership on SCP (SDG12). The session discussed recommendations on what is needed to unleash a systemic shift to SCP, including how to inspire policy changes in line with the SDGs and the National Pathways.

The session highlighted the urgent need for an integrated approach to address the interconnected crises of hunger, malnutrition, climate change and biodiversity loss while stressing that there is no “solution fits all” response. Efforts to protect and restore ecosystems are crucial for mitigating climate change, preserving biodiversity, and improving the ecosystem services that underpin the production of healthy and sustainable food. The importance of better information, collaboration among institutions, integration across sectors, inclusion, and inspiration in solving the food puzzle was emphasized.

Governments were urged to hold the agrifood industry accountable and address misaligned subsidies that hinder the transition to sustainable practices. Additionally, securing land tenure rights for marginalized farmers was highlighted as a crucial step.

Country-specific challenges and initiatives were discussed. Ghana and Cambodia focused on the challenges linked to establishing comprehensive school feeding programmes, while Viet Nam focused on the need for scientific evidence to support decision-making as well as the need for policy harmonization and alignment. Cambodia and Viet Nam highlighted the importance of integrating the concept of food systems into policies and strategic plans. Cambodia also called for behaviour change and consumer awareness towards healthy and sustainable diets.

Finally, the session underscored the importance of involving all stakeholders, including policymakers, businesses and consumers, in promoting SCP to achieve sustainable food systems transformation.

### Key messages

- There is an urgent need for governments and actors to implement measures to shift away from unsustainable food consumption and production. Interventions must be developed in synergy, with a focus on co-benefits, community by community.
- Governments and other actors must embrace collaboration across all levels. National Pathways can be important tools to promote coordination mechanisms among stakeholders in addressing the complexity of food systems transformation.
- An important step in the transition to sustainable food systems is to provide a fair distribution of value along the chain and ensure that marginalized farmers have secure land tenure rights, which incentivize sustainable investments.



- Formal land rights alone cannot guarantee more sustainable practices. Performance-based finance has a strong role to play in rewarding good players.
- Subsidies should be reoriented to support the transition to more sustainable food systems, including through agroecological practices and other innovative approaches. Farmers must be compensated to shift towards nature-positive practices.
- Governments must make sure that agrifood actors are held accountable for the negative impacts of their actions, including on the supply chain, and adopt regulations that prevent unsustainable practices and promote sustainable ones.
- Consumption behaviour is currently strongly influenced by the global increase in food prices, causing growing inequalities. The global price crisis is also raising input prices for farmers. Both production challenges and consumer behaviour are obstacles to diverse diets.
- Major efforts are needed to strengthen consumer awareness and understanding on the link between sustainable consumption and production, and on promoting interest in healthy diets from sustainable food systems.
- Inclusive business can also enable food systems transformation and should be a guiding principle in the effort towards changing food consumption and production patterns.
- Supporting the private sector on a sustainability journey is central to MSC.



## Session 5: Promoting the transformation through science, finance, human rights and innovation

### Moderator

Mr. Adam Gerstenmier, Executive Director, Food Action Alliance

### Speakers

- H.E. Saboto Caesar, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Mr. Jean Jacques Mbonigaba Muhinda, Regional Head for East Africa, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)
- Ms. Mansi Shah, Program Manager for the Future of Work Activities, Self-Employed Women's Association
- Mr. Gunther Beger, Managing Director, UNIDO
- Ms. Christine Campeau, Global Advocacy Director, CARE
- Ms. Hildegard Lingnau, Executive Secretary, Global Forum on Agricultural Research
- Mr. Joe Phelan, Executive Director, Asia Pacific, World Business Council for Sustainable Development and Co-Founding Institution, Good Food Finance Network
- Ms. Nadine Gbossa, Chief of Means of Implementation, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub

### Summary

This session explored the key enablers for sustainable food systems from the perspective of science, finance and investments, human rights and innovation in all its forms, acknowledging that evidence alone is necessary but not sufficient to make transformation processes happen. Recognizing the essential and yet continued shortage of various context-sensitive and culturally appropriate solutions, this session assessed the political economy that shapes food systems decision-making in the face of trade-offs and relations. It showcased concrete national and community examples that have dealt with such obstacles to unleash their local enablers and foster holistic food systems transformation.

Food systems leaders underscored the need to treat small-scale farmers and other stakeholders as equal partners in the long, complex decision-making process – from planning to implementation of campaigns and programmes. Leveraging local communities' collective strength and developing evidence-based policies that meet farmers' needs also allow for affordable, homegrown solutions that better realize sustainable food systems pathways and outcomes.

With less than seven years remaining to make progress with the SDGs, food systems actors pushed for strengthened bottom-up approaches to help empower more small-scale producers, particularly women. The session also highlighted the need for a more holistic public-private financing package, citing how a good food finance network and innovative finance solutions are critical to food systems transformation. Financing plans and investments, in fact, must be capitalized and translated into flagship programmes that would also accelerate impacts for converging areas of nutrition, food security and socioeconomic development, among others.

### Key messages

- Human rights are of central importance for equitable food systems. However, progress is not happening fast enough.
- Science, innovation, human rights and finance should be jointly promoted. Science, finance and innovation for food systems transformation should all be promoted with a human rights-based approach.
- There is a need for concerted efforts to strengthen capacities and increase knowledge on how to implement human rights-based approaches.
- People need to be put at the centre of food systems transformation by including a focus on ensuring decent incomes, protecting human rights and providing nutritious and affordable food, while addressing climate change and biodiversity loss.
- Rather than charity, the poor require an enabling policy environment with access to market systems and opportunities.
- When it comes to innovation and investment, broad and inclusive efforts are needed, including from the public and private sectors as well as academia. Ambitious public and private finance is necessary to meet the challenge.

- Women play a major role in each and every part of the food system. However, women are often engaged informally in the value chain and therefore do not always have the same rights and tend to have more limited access to finance.
- Solutions need to be adapted to specific national contexts, with more innovation needed in terms of technologies that are customized to smallholders and the poor, while overcoming gender inequalities.
- There is a need to link National Pathways with investment strategies and pipelines with concrete business cases and clear roles for public and private finance.
- There is an urgent need to focus on implementation and action.



©/MARD Viet Nam



## Session 6: Strengthening the UN Food Systems Summit's ecosystem of support

### Moderator

Mr. James Lomax, Food Systems and Agriculture Adviser, UNEP

### Speakers

- Ms. Sylvia Lopez-Ekra, Deputy Director, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub
- Mr. James Lomax, Food Systems and Agriculture Adviser, UNEP
- Ms. Nancy Aburto, Deputy Director of the Food and Nutrition Division, FAO. Representing the Action Coalition on Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems for Children and All
- Ms. Ann Trevenen-Jones, Lead of the Food Systems Governance Programme, GAIN. Representing the Urban Food Systems Coalition
- Mr. Oliver Oliveros, Coordinator of the Agroecology Coalition
- Ms. Elise Golan, Director for Sustainable Development, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Representing the Coalition for Sustainable Productivity Growth
- Mr. Anthony Wenndt, Technical Officer, GAIN. Representing the Social Protection Coalition
- Ms. Leigh Ann Winowiecki. Representing the Coalition of Action 4 Soil Health
- Ms. Maria Jose Rojas. Representing the School Meals Coalition
- Mr. Mark Driscoll, Founder and Director of Tasting the Future. Representing the Shifting to Healthy, Humane and Equitable Livestock Systems Coalition
- Mr. Christian Fusillier, Lead Global Technical Advisor, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). Representing the Public Development Banks Coalition
- Ms. Clementine O'Connor, Programme Officer, UNEP. Representing the Food is Never Waste Coalition
- Ms. Nicole de Paula, Senior SDGs Expert, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub

### Summary

This session focused on the role of UNFSS coalitions of action in promoting and adopting a food systems approach and opportunities to build and strengthen bridges, synergies and cooperation among coalitions to further a systems approach, with a view to accelerate food systems transformation.

During the roundtable discussion, several coalitions, including the Coalition on Healthy Diets, Urban Food Systems Coalition, Agroecology Coalition, Sustainable Productivity Growth Coalition, and Social Protection Coalition, presented main challenges, progress made, and efforts to adopt a food systems approach. They highlighted the significance of self-reflection exercises, enhanced collaboration efforts, and effective communication to demonstrate their collective impact.

All participants recognized the importance of collaboration and coherence both within and across coalitions to address potential duplications and fragmentation in supporting countries in the transition to more sustainable, resilient and inclusive food systems and to advance progress on the SDGs. The discussions also emphasized the importance of transitioning from a single-issue approach to a systems approach and from supply-driven to demand-driven action.

Coalition representatives also described their efforts to promote inclusivity and active engagement, involving member states, non-state actors and the private sector, and paying special attention to youth, women and indigenous communities.

Finally, the importance of patience was emphasized, recognizing the value of engaging in challenging conversations.

### Key messages

- Coalitions of action, which were one of the major outcomes of the UNFSS, have a significant role to play in advancing a food systems approach.
- Many coalitions focus on single aspects of transformation, without explicit consideration of interconnections of food system drivers or broader impacts. Adopting a food systems lens can help link single agendas.
- By working together, coalitions can leverage their efforts to advance a holistic, inclusive food systems approach and support countries more effectively in long-term systemic change.

- Coalitions are progressing and maturing. As a collective force, they have the potential to support food systems transformation, but greater efforts must be made to avoid working in silos at all levels. Duplications need to be addressed and used as opportunities for collaboration and creating synergies.
- Several countries are members of different coalitions. They can play a role in helping to build synergies for supporting transformation, including through their National Convenors.
- Efforts towards increased collaboration among coalitions must continue towards the Stocktaking Moment in July and beyond. By adopting a food systems lens, the collective group of coalitions should tell a story that is greater than the sum of its parts.



©/MARD Viet Nam

## Session 7: Measuring transformation

### Moderator

Ms. Viktoria de Bourbon de Parme, Food and Agriculture Transformation Lead, World Benchmarking Alliance

### Speakers

- H.E. Sanjo Faniran, National Convenor, Nigeria
- Mr. Joao Campari, Global Food Lead, WWF
- Ms. Kate Blaszk, Director, Protein Transition, Asia Research and Engagement
- Mr. Jamie Morrison, Senior Advisor, GAIN
- Ms. Nadine Gbossa, Director Food Systems Coordination, IFAD, Chief Means of Implementation, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub
- Ms. Sylvia Lopez-Ekra, Deputy Director, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub

### Summary

The session focused on highlighting the importance of how using monitoring instruments such as benchmarks and other tools can strengthen National Pathways toward sustainable food systems within the UNFSS follow-up process.

The session set out to demonstrate how the use of different monitoring mechanisms supports multistakeholders in keeping track of their progress. Through a range of use cases presented by the panellists – such as the National Steering Committee on Food Systems in Nigeria (a governance platform reporting back to the National Convenor and the president), the global Food Systems Dashboard and the 2030 Countdown Initiative, guidance reports for investors – the extent and impact of the applicability of monitoring instruments was demonstrated. The role of the private sector was also noted as key for a food systems transformation, given the extent of its impact across food systems.

Monitoring instruments should not only lead to an improved understanding of where actors are in terms of meeting the SDG agenda but should ultimately lead to accountability. The burden of accountability should not only be put on governments but on all relevant stakeholders, in particular the private sector.

For a successful biennial food systems stocktake, baseline-level data are needed, and information disclosure is essential to define key measurement priorities. An accountability mechanism is needed to pull all this together whereby standard-setters, civil society, the United Nations, and governments can collaborate to identify where progress is being made and improve in areas where gaps still exist.

### Key messages

- Accountability is critical for food systems transformation and to the UNFSS follow-up process; as such, national efforts must be strengthened to include adequate accountability provisions in planning around National Pathways, as well as globally to link to the global biennial Stocktaking Moments, and to annual SDG progress reviews.
- In addition to monitoring frameworks, instruments need to be put in place to assess and track the progress of financial flows and actions taken by the public and private sectors, including development cooperation.
- Multistakeholder involvement is vital for designing adequate, context-relevant accountability mechanisms.
- Governments, the private sector, civil society and development partners all have a crucial role and responsibilities in transitioning towards sustainable food systems.
- Measurement of progress can only be achieved once a baseline level is defined. Data collection and disclosure are essential to inform the key measurement priorities for each stakeholder.
- The Stocktaking Moment should be used as an opportunity to further explore how progress will be measured and which criteria, including as related to inclusivity, are essential to assess food systems transformation.
- Data and evidence on food systems transformation are critical to strengthening accountability.





©/MARD Viet Nam

## Session 8: Dialogue of National Convenors

### Moderator

Ms. Sylvia Lopez-Ekra, Deputy Director, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub

### Speakers

- Sir. David Nabarro, Strategic Director, 4SD Foundation
- Mr. Alwin Kopse, Head International Affairs and Food Systems, Federal Office for Agriculture, Switzerland
- H.E. Sok Silo, Secretary General, Council for Agricultural and Rural Development, Office of the Council of Ministers, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, and National Convenor, Cambodia
- Ms. Truong Tuyet Mai, Vice-Director of the National Institute of Nutrition, Viet Nam
- Mr. Martin Hoppe, Head of Division Food and Nutrition Security, Global Food Policy, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany
- Mr. Kristofer Hamel, Head of Climate Impact Response, Office of the Special Envoy for Climate Change

### Summary

Session 8 hosted a Dialogue of National Convenors. The dialogue centered around the significance of National Pathways resulting from the UNFSS and the pivotal role of National Convenors in advancing the food systems agenda at the country level. In the opening, presenters emphasized the need for a guiding principle to shape food systems evolution and highlighted the importance of functioning effectively within systems.

During the discussion, National Convenors shared their countries' experiences in transforming food systems. These included initiatives such as a Citizens' Assembly, national dialogues, and coordination efforts to drive recommendations and address policy fragmentation. The focus was on multi-sectoral engagement, governance improvement, and the role of innovation in driving transformation in their countries.

Following the Convenors' dialogue, experts shared their views on the importance of food systems transformation in the context of climate change. They called for broader stakeholder intervention and stressed the importance of maintaining the momentum to achieve progress.

Interventions from the audience reflected commitments to financial support for resilient food systems and the need to involve non-state actors in the transformation process. The session concluded with final remarks from the panellists. All panellists recalled the need to cooperate at national and international levels to achieve the Agenda 2030. They said it is imperative to reflect upon ways to enhance collaborative efforts and essential to acknowledge and appreciate diversity to transform food systems.

### Key messages

- Food systems need to be transformed to prevent and overcome interlinked crises that risk derailing action to implement the SDGs, which are currently off-track.
- To do so, it is critical to:
  - i. establish multisectoral and multistakeholder processes at different governance levels, where relevant sectors are represented and stakeholders, including civil society and private sector, women, farmers, youth and Indigenous Peoples, have a voice;
  - ii. strengthen policy coherence, ensuring that sectoral efforts are integrated in a systemic way to optimize synergies and identify and manage trade-offs;
  - iii. measure progress and developing accountability mechanisms to ensure alignment of efforts and that transformation goes in the desired direction;
  - iv. ensure that transformation efforts allow the four "Cs" to be addressed holistically: COVID-19, climate, conflict and cost-of-living crises;
  - v. put human health and sustainability in all its dimensions at the core of food system transformation efforts so that it effectively contributes to the SDGs.
- UN Country Teams, through the UN Resident Coordinator systems, must be engaged and provide a space for action, deepening collective efforts towards implementing sustainable food systems pathways.
- Empowering youth, women, Indigenous Peoples and smallholder farmers is essential to accelerate policy change more equitably and effectively, ensuring long-term transformation at the local and global levels.



- Harnessing science, technology and innovation improves the chances of countries to create a conducive policy environment leading to long-term food systems transformation.
- National Convenors and multiple stakeholders should adopt a whole-of-society approach to keep strengthening National Pathways with a rights-based approach. Challenges related to allocation of budgets for cross-cutting food systems transformation objectives need to be addressed through improved inter-ministerial coordination.
- Opportunities for peer-learning among National Convenors and other stakeholders need to be strengthened, as well as science-policy interfaces, to deepen their collective efforts towards National Pathways and to report on progress made at the national level since the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit.



©/MARD Viet Nam

## Session 9: Conclusions and closing ceremony

### Moderator

Mr. Alwin Kopse, Head International Affairs and Food Systems, Federal Office for Agriculture, Switzerland

### Speakers

- Mr. Jamie Morrison, Senior Advisor, GAIN
- Ms. Corinna Hawkes, Director, Food Systems and Food Safety Division, FAO
- Ms. Rebecca Shaw, Chief Scientist and Senior Vice-President, WWF
- Mr. Adam Gerstenmier, Executive Director, Food Action Alliance
- Mr. James Lomax, Food Systems and Agriculture Adviser, UNEP
- Ms. Viktoria de Bourbon de Parme, Food and Agriculture Transformation Lead, World Benchmarking Alliance
- Ms. Sylvia Lopez-Ekra, Deputy Director, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub
- Mr. Thinh Van Ngoc, CEO, WWF, Viet Nam
- Ms. Nguyen Thi Viet Ha, Vice Director of External Affairs and International Cooperation Department, Viet Nam Farmers' Union
- Mr. Mogesh Sababathy, Youth Representative and Co-founder of Project Ocean Hope, Malaysia
- H.E. Nguyen Hoang Hiep, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Viet Nam

### Summary

The aim of this session was to bring together the key findings of all previous sessions and produce a package of take-away messages for the Stocktaking Moment in July 2023.

The session started with summaries by all moderators, where they stressed the need to, inter alia: (i) strengthen inclusive governance frameworks and inter-governmental collaboration; (ii) adopt an integrated approach cutting across different sectors; (iii) put people at the centre, including by improving land tenure rights and market access for the poor; (iv) promote more holistic and inclusive accountability mechanisms; strengthen collaboration across UNFSS coalitions; and (v) increase alignment among development agencies in support of National Pathway implementation.

After the summaries, a multistakeholder panel offered reflections on the different session outcomes, including points that may have been lacking in the discussions. The points they highlighted included the need to: (i) strengthen the voice of youth in the discussions; (ii) listen to and empower farmers, and provide them with incentives; (iii) support people to enable them to take care of the environment; and (iv) work together in a constructive and solution-oriented manner, based on countries' effective needs.

The panel discussion was followed by a wrap-up by the Food Systems Coordination Hub, which stressed the continuing need to: (i) nurture the National Pathways, shifting from visions to action plans; (ii) set up multisectoral platforms at national level; (iii) ensure that all relevant actors can participate in a meaningful way; (iv) urgently address policy fragmentation; and (v) leverage the means of implementation with adequate finance.

Finally, the conference was formally closed by Viet Nam's Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

### Key messages

- *The importance of food systems transformation for coping with multiple challenges:* Sustainable, resilient, healthy and inclusive food systems are urgently needed and are a precondition to address the interrelated crises of food insecurity, malnutrition, health, climate change, biodiversity loss and conflict, as well as high energy and consumer prices.
- *The need to link short-term and long-term efforts:* While it is sometimes necessary to take short-term action to tackle multiple crises, such action should be conducted in the framework of a long-term strategy and a holistic and inclusive approach to food systems governance and policy making.
- *The need for inclusiveness, participation and meaningful collaboration at all levels:* Food systems transformation is a whole-of-society task that requires meaningful engagement and participation of all actors across all sectors, leaving no one behind.





## ON-SITE SIDE EVENTS

This section presents the summaries of the side events as provided by their organizers.

### Side event 1: Clustering industry towards sustainable food systems transformation in Viet Nam

#### Organizers:

**WWF and GAIN**

#### Co-organizers:

**Viet Nam Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development**

#### Summary

Clustering has been applied as a common approach for a long period of time under different names, policies and approaches, generating jobs and economic growth and efficiency in many developing countries. Viet Nam has been at the forefront of countries that were able to benefit from global food trade, becoming the 15<sup>th</sup> country in the world in terms of food export. Nevertheless, Viet Nam, like many other economies, would like to further enhance value addition and reduce post-harvest losses and ecological footprints by organizing actors in food value chains. This side event organized by UNIDO and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Viet Nam aimed to investigate the challenges and best practices when it comes to clustering in Viet Nam and in other countries. Speakers from the government, the private sector as well as the development arena shared their experiences and the most recent best practices.

Transforming food systems in a sustainable manner will require a more comprehensive approach to enable businesses to follow environmental, social and food safety requirements while generating more income. With regard to the enabling environment for clustering, Viet Nam has already introduced legislations and policies; nevertheless, actual implementation, as in many countries, requires additional support. For instance, many enterprises are already keen to change their practices and apply digitalization as part of their operation, which can further improve collaboration among actors. The importance of business models and “power balance” and trust-building among micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, and particularly multinational companies, should be considered and, if needed, addressed by governments to facilitate healthy competition. Key points mentioned by the panellists were collaboration at pre-competitive level, engagement of businesses of all sizes with the leading role of bigger ones, sharing of resources and infrastructure, and identification of common problems. Clear rules and responsibilities and tailored business plans that create shared benefits are important.

Furthermore, clustering could offer opportunities for innovation. The concept of a food innovation hub can serve as a possible methodology for stakeholders from the food sector to facilitate a wider innovation ecosystem required for cooperation toward food systems transformation. Accordingly, common public and private services from breeding and production inputs to logistics, packaging and cold chain will be required for many enterprises to create value-added food products. These services should be available at the local level to ensure longer shelf-life, particularly for value-added products.

Overall, there was a consensus among the speakers that clustering or cooperation in general among small-holder farmers and micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises can have a positive impact in transforming practices in our food systems, including improved climate mitigation and compliance with market and regulatory requirements. Food innovation hubs can be a new way to deliver wider stakeholder collaboration to achieve our goals.

## Side event 2: Food systems pathways: a holistic approach for accelerating implementation

### Organizers:

**WWF and GAIN**

### Summary

This side event brought together different perspectives on how to accelerate the implementation of National Pathways and transform food systems at the national level. The objective was to showcase the kind of support and approach offered by WWF and GAIN and discuss how the transformation, implementation, and ambition gaps can be closed to achieve healthy and sustainable food system transformation.

The event began with opening remarks from the moderators, Brent Loken (Global Food Lead Scientist, WWF International) and Jessica Colston (Environment Technical Lead, GAIN), who welcomed the speakers and participants. Following the welcome, Jamie Morrison (Senior Advisor, Policy and External Relations, GAIN) shared a summary of how GAIN has been working with several countries to further develop and support the implementation of their National Pathways, and Joao Campari (Global Leader, Food Practice, WWF International) presented the WWF's latest thinking on "[Closing the Gaps](#)" in national food systems transformation.

Experiences from Pakistan and Thailand were shared by Faiz Rasool (Senior Policy Advisor, GAIN Pakistan) and Ply Pirom (Project Manager, Sustainable Consumption and Production, WWF Thailand), respectively. They highlighted the support provided by WWF and GAIN in these countries, and a question-and-answer session allowed for further exploration of their work. Several questions were raised, including about the challenges faced by other countries in South East Asia in relation to WWF's work in Thailand and about the policy process to develop the National Pathway in Thailand.

A panel discussion then focused on addressing the challenges in advancing holistic food systems transformation at the national level. A number of issues were discussed, including the effectiveness of UNFSS Pathways in advancing action, the need to enhance national capacity for food system transformation, and the importance of monitoring progress and collecting relevant data.

## Side event 3: Guiding multistakeholder collaboration for sustainable food systems transformation

### Organizers:

**UNEP**

### Co-organizers:

**FAO, UNDP, WWF, Rikolto, and The Alliance of Bioversity International & CIAT**

### Summary

The side event was convened in the context of the UNEP-FAO-UNDP upcoming publication "Rethinking food systems: a guide for multistakeholder collaboration", produced with technical contributions from the OPN SFS programme. The opening remarks introduced multistakeholder collaboration as a meaningful yet challenging endeavor, as it involves listening to and considering others' interests, sharing power, taking risks, and leaving our comfort zones. The guide was presented as a powerful resource for multistakeholder collaboration.

The opening remarks were followed by a presentation of the five building blocks for successful multistakeholder collaboration, as described in the guide: (i) fostering broad multistakeholder participation; (ii) ensuring a sound understanding of the food system; (iii) nurturing inclusive and effective collaboration; (iv) defining a compass and a roadmap; and (v) ensuring the sustainability of collaboration. The presentation was followed by a panel discussion of good practices and challenges from Viet Nam, Bolivia and Ireland.

In Viet Nam, smallholders' limited access to third-party certification led to the creation of a Participatory Guarantee System, which provides trust-based food safety assurance (certification) to producers based on their participation in the system. Ten years after its inception, the Participatory Guarantee System has been expanded to over 100 co-operatives and food entrepreneurs, and is integrating a food systems approach in its functioning by involving members in participatory food system and stakeholder analyses, and the co-development of a strategy and roadmap. Another initiative in Viet Nam's Mekong Delta is supporting communities in integrating shrimp and rice production, with a wide range of stakeholders (from local communities and government to international NGOs and academia) involved in different components of the transition from a traditional single-crop input-intensive approach to a holistic shrimp-rice model.



In La Paz, Bolivia, a series of issues (e.g. high levels of malnutrition, increased dependence on foreign markets, changing diets), together with the identification of a gap in policy debate and citizen participation, led to the creation of the Municipal Food Security Committee. Meaningful interactions between a wide range of stakeholders and Government buy-in enables the Committee to focus on identifying each actor's strengths (both soft and hard skills) to close the gaps that have been identified as catalytic for the transformation of the local food system.

In Ireland, where a Stakeholder Committee is tasked with developing the vision and objectives for the country's 10-year agrifood sector strategies, the selection of a neutral facilitator and secretarial support were mentioned as important contributions to the Committee's deliberations. A key principle of the Committee is that if people are involved in the design of a strategy and its implementation plan, they will likely take actions that align with the strategy.

The session showcased similar motivational factors to embark on multistakeholder endeavours across different levels, from national to local and sectoral. One key factor is to assure inclusive dialogues among many voices of the food system.

A powerful message resonated as to the way forward: To move towards sustainable food systems, we need to focus on each other's competitive advantages in order to better work together.

## Side event 4: Local-based strategies to sustain food systems targeting household food and nutrition security in Viet Nam

### Organizers:

**National Institute of Nutrition, Ministry of Health of Viet Nam; Department of Cooperatives and Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Viet Nam; The Alliance of Bioversity and CIAT ; Embassy of Canada in Viet Nam**

### Co-organizers:

**FAO, UNICEF and the Scaling Up Nutrition Civil Society Alliance Viet Nam**

### Summary

The objectives of this side event were to:

- provide an overview of sustainable food systems for healthy diets, and food and nutrition security in sustainable food systems on a global scale;
- introduce local-based strategies and policies to sustain food systems targeting household's healthy diets and food and nutrition security in Viet Nam;
- share results of nutrition-sensitive agrifood systems to improve diets of children and food and nutrition security in Viet Nam;
- gain insights on the role of food safety in sustainable food systems transformation.
- learn from policymakers, experts and stakeholders about leverage points from nutrition-sensitive agrifood systems to improve healthy diets, and food and nutrition security in Viet Nam.

The first presentation gave an overview of sustainable food systems towards sustainable and healthy diets on a global scale. It pointed out that the transformation to sustainable food systems would need serious attention for promoting healthy diets, consumer choices and food environments, through coherent bundles of policies, and technological and social innovations steered by governments in a highly uncertain world. There were many options for solutions but evidence of whether and how they can transform food systems and diets was still to be built.

The second presentation shared the results of nutrition-sensitive agri-food systems (NSAF) interventions aimed at improving the diets of children in Viet Nam. The conclusion emphasized the urgent need to prioritize livelihood outputs in order to enhance the health and nutritional status of children in Viet Nam.

The Department of Cooperatives and Rural Development and the National Institute of Nutrition introduced the Zero Hunger National Action Programme (ZH NAP) and the National Nutrition Strategies (NNS) in Viet Nam, which underlined the integration of the NSAF model in agricultural production towards ensuring household food security and improving childhood nutrition status. The presentation also emphasized the strong connection of ZH NAP and NNS



with the National Action Plan on Food Systems Transformation toward Transparency, Responsibility and Sustainability by 2030, requested multisectoral collaboration in its implementation process.

The key areas of the One Health concept for sustainable and healthy diets would be integrated in current CGIAR initiatives, projects and innovations in Viet Nam to prevent transmission of zoonotic diseases and antimicrobial resistance, and improve food safety was also described. The activities and findings using the One Health approach would contribute to SFS NAP and the strategy of the One Health Partnership of Viet Nam, as well as optimize the health of people, animals and ecosystems.

At the end of the event, intensive discussions took place about a number of issues, including: global efforts to sustain healthy diets; specific activities in Viet Nam to change the gender roles in improving nutrition and diets; how food system actors enable the food environment to provide more healthy diets; and whether the ZH NAP considers climate change and cultural dimensions.

Participants agreed that NSAF model should continue to be promoted and integrated under the SFS NAP to sustain food systems targeting household food and nutrition security in the country, and with multisectoral collaboration between stakeholders and meaningful engagement of the targeted groups.

## **Side event 5: How to move food systems transformation from theory to policy: the case of Viet Nam**

### **Organizers:**

**Institute for Policy and Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development (IPSARD), the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT, and International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)**

### **Summary**

This side event stressed the need to transform food systems with respect to aspects of agriculture, food production and supply, as well as consumption, while considering environmental factors and the various channels for transforming research results into policies. Speakers emphasized the need for comprehensive considerations in transforming food systems and integrating sustainability into food policy. Knowledge and experiences were shared on how to stimulate effective food systems governance and policy.

Dr. Tran Cong Thang, Director General of IPSARD, initiated the event by highlighting the innovations in thinking and development orientations for subsectors in agriculture and rural areas in Viet Nam via the new strategy on sustainable agriculture and rural development in the period 2021–2030 and the Vision 2050. Dr. Truong Thi Thu Trang, Director of the Center for Agricultural Policy of IPSARD then presented an overview of Vietnamese policies and regulations for a healthy food environment. The review assessed policies across different domains of the food environment, including food product properties, food outlet properties, food marketing, food availability and accessibility, food prices and affordability, and food desirability. Dr. Trang also discussed the importance of creating a supportive environment for producing and distributing healthy foods. The third speaker, Dr. Deborah Nabuuma, a Nutrition Scientist from the Alliance of Bioversity and CIAT, presented the findings of a policy review on nutrition-sensitive agrifood systems in Viet Nam. She emphasized the importance of nutrition-sensitive food systems in addressing malnutrition and improving health outcomes and the need for policies that support smallholder farmers and local food systems. Dr. Alan de Brauw, Senior Research Fellow from IFPRI, discussed initiatives to finance sustainable food systems at the grassroots level. He emphasized the importance of developing financial and insurance mechanisms that support smallholder farmers and encourage sustainable agriculture practices. Dr. Lorenzo Giovanni Bellù, Senior Economist from FAO, shared insights on “The future of food and agriculture – Drivers and triggers for transformation.” He discussed the challenges facing the global food system and the need for transformational change to ensure food security and sustainability.

During the discussion session, the speakers deliberated on a number of issues, such as the promotion and subsidization of healthy food and the role of market mechanisms in the economy. They also discussed the challenges of transforming research results into policies, including the Prime Minister’s decision on the National Action Plan for Food Systems Transformation toward Transparency, Responsibility, and Sustainability in Viet Nam by 2030.

The side event provided a valuable opportunity for stakeholders to share their insights and experiences on the process of creating sustainable food systems. Speakers highlighted the need for comprehensive environmental considerations in food systems transformation and the importance of integrating sustainability into food policy. They discussed smallholder farmers’ challenges and the need for policies that support local food systems. The event emphasized the importance of multistakeholder collaborative efforts to promote sustainable agricultural practices and ensure a healthy food environment for all.

## Side event 6: Connecting the dots: How can the National Biodiversity Strategies and Actions Plans and the UNFSS pathways help implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework at the country level and accelerate food systems transformation?

### Organizers:

**WWF, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT, MARD, Crop Trust, and UNEP**

### Summary

On 25 April, high-level speakers gathered to discuss how the GBF and its targets can be implemented at the national level through instruments such as the NBSAPs and the UNFSS pathways. The event highlighted the need to integrate food systems with biodiversity conservation and sustainable use and presented successful examples of aligned food systems transformation pathways with food biodiversity goals.

Dr. Juan Lucas Restrepo, Global Director of Partnerships and Advocacy at CGIAR and Director General at the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT, emphasized the urgency of protecting biodiversity for human survival and the need to implement the GBF and integrate food system approaches into updated NBSAPs.

Moderated by Martina Fleckenstein from WWF, the panel discussion featured experts who shared valuable insights and experiences related to food systems transformation and biodiversity conservation.

Dr. Dao The Anh, representing VAAS, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Viet Nam, stressed the importance of utilizing biodiversity to ensure food security and support market access for small-scale food producers. He highlighted how Viet Nam's adoption of a food system sustainability approach enabled effective adaptation to climate change and enhanced food and nutrition security.

Marieta Sakalian, Global Programme Coordinator of UNEP Nature Action Programme of Work, highlighted UNEP's active engagement in supporting the implementation of National Pathways for Food Systems Transformation. She emphasized the need to strengthen food systems approaches within the updated NBSAPs and discussed various entry points to connect with the implementation mechanism of the GBF. UNEP is already involved in ongoing activities related to food systems transformation and has planned future initiatives to further enhance progress within the framework of the GBF and NBSAPs.

Oliver Oliveros, Coordinator of the Agroecology Coalition, emphasized the role of the Agroecology Coalition in supporting the implementation of country pathways for food systems transformation through agroecology. The Coalition's work involves facilitating the exchange of knowledge, promoting investments in agroecology, and actively seeking political engagement.

Anna Locke, Senior Research Associate at Overseas Development Institute and Co-Director of Prindex, discussed Target 18 of the GBF, which focuses on eliminating, phasing out or reforming incentives and subsidies harmful to biodiversity. She emphasized the role of NBSAPs in supporting this process and provided recommendations for member states to consider during the updating of their NBSAPs.

The second part of the side event featured successful cases from Asia and beyond that can be replicated and adapted to implement global targets related to food systems at the national level. These included highlighting the crucial role of agricultural biodiversity as an important component of biodiversity and a key resource for sustainable food systems.

Carolina Navarrete, Senior Advisor at the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT, introduced Terra-I, an advanced monitoring system that effectively detects and prevents land-use changes caused by human activities, thus promoting sustainable agricultural practices in Viet Nam.

Ply Pirom, Sustainable Consumption and Production Project Manager at WWF Thailand, emphasized the increasing inclination of Thai consumers towards sustainable food choices. He also highlighted Thai projects' active contribution to the implementation of UNFSS pathways and the GBF.

Dr. Vu Dang Toan, representing the Plant Resource Center, MARD, presented Viet Nam's conservation efforts, including legal frameworks and strategies, and the National Genebank's initiatives for germplasm conservation. In addition, he highlighted Viet Nam's successful participation in the "Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change" project of the Crop Trust, which focused on safeguarding crop diversity and enhancing food security, offering valuable insights for other countries facing similar challenges.

The event concluded with remarks from Rebecca Shaw, Chief Scientist at WWF, who stressed the need to be highly conscious of the modalities in which food is produced to ensure healthy people and a healthy planet.

## Side event 7: Cities and local governments accelerating cohesive and inclusive food systems transformation

### Organizers:

**FAO and African Smart Cities Innovation Foundation**

### Co-organizers:

**African Sunrise Alliance Investments, UNEP, GAIN, Rikolto, United Cities and Local Governments, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, and the RUF global partnership**

### Summary

This side event focused on the key role of cities in achieving sustainable and inclusive food systems transformation.

City and local governments are often excluded from national food systems and consultations. This session aimed to raise the voices of these key stakeholders, in addition to a workshop to draft concrete guidelines on establishing effective and strengthened multilevel governance.

As a preliminary step of this process, the organizers collected feedback and ideas on the draft guidelines from cities and local government representatives.

The event was opened by Corinna Hawkes, Director of Food Systems Division at FAO, who focused her intervention on the important role of cities, and the need for interaction between the different levels of governments for effective multilevel governance.

Maxmillian Iranqhe, Mayor of Arusha, illustrated how the City Council has been actively working on critical food systems issues.

Other voices were included in the event through the preliminary collection of feedback and ideas from cities and local government representatives, situated in a variety of contexts, about successes, barriers and learnings in multilevel governance on food systems.

Charlotte Flechet, Global Director of the Good Food for Cities programme at Rikolto and moderator for the event, led the participants along two session components: a panel discussion; and working groups on barriers to and opportunities for multilevel food system governance.

Panellists Mr Martin Hoppe from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Ms Mansi Shah, from the Self-Employed Women's Association of India, Truong Tuyet Mai, Vice-Director of National Institute of Nutrition in Viet Nam, and Tường Tạ Văn, Deputy Director of the Agriculture and Rural Development Department of Ha Noi, shared their experiences of local food policies and approaches for collaborating with different government levels and with non-state actors.

After the first debate, panellists joined the audience to form three working groups for a workshop-style engagement on key issues and approaches to consider when developing Guidelines on Multilevel Governance. Outputs of this workshop will contribute to the development of the multilevel governance framework and guidelines, and a general report on the concluding comments of the event will be published soon.

In view of the 2023 UNFSS Stocktaking Moment, the SFSP Conference also focused on the role and efforts of the National Convenors from the Food Systems Summit Dialogues, and the Coalitions launched after the Summit, especially the [Coalition on Sustainable and Inclusive Urban Food Systems](#).

Mr. Jamie Morrison, Senior Advisor for GAIN, succinctly concluded the event with key points that can also guide next steps. These included the applicability of guidelines and a framework on multilevel governance in a wide variety of contexts; the critical importance of information-sharing and local capacity-building on a food systems approach; and leveraging multilevel collaboration by mobilizing governments on practical local-level food transformation entry points such as food waste; and the role that the Urban Food Systems Coalition might play in closing the gap between national- and local-level food systems transformations.

## Side event 8: Deforestation-free agricultural commodity production and trade

### Organizers:

**UNDP**

### Summary

Despite all the agreements, actions and regulations, global commodity production remains a leading cause of forest destruction. The production of commodities such as palm oil, soy, beef and timber has contributed significantly to deforestation and forest degradation in many parts of the world, particularly in tropical regions. Many efforts have been made and commitments taken to address agriculture-driven deforestation, but these have not been sufficient to halt the loss of forests associated with commodity production. There are also challenges in regulatory enforcement and compliance. To address the issue of global deforestation driven by commodity production, it is essential to address the root causes of the problem and requires systemic change in how we produce, consume and govern commodities. It also requires a collaborative effort between governments and other actors – buyers, industry players, multilateral partners, civil society organizations, and local communities. Regulations on deforestation-free commodities, such as the recent one from the European Union, call for further efforts to ensure sustainable, deforestation-free supply chains in exporting countries. The side event is a response to this call, creating a platform for sharing experiences and perspectives among different groups of actors.

A summary of the main points from the panel discussion follows.

The European Union delegation provided an overview of the EU regulation on deforestation-free commodities and emphasized that the objective of the regulation is to minimize the EU's contribution to deforestation and forest degradation worldwide, in response to the international discussion on climate change. Countries must demonstrate how the existing enabling environment and infrastructure could be connected to emerging international requirements such as the EU DFR to promote direct changes for innovative transformation to tackle climate change and deforestation. In Viet Nam's case, regulations such as those in relation to the legality of timber products are already being implemented.

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) explained that has become necessary to leverage current interests and investments from both the private and public sectors in sustainable, deforestation-free land-use practices and that IFC could play a role in working with the private sector. An example was given of a business case investing in the deforestation-free value chain, from the livestock sector. In addition, the "IFC principles for sustainable practices", were introduced, along with the roles of the supporting financial institutions.

The Association of Viet Nam Timber and Forest Products shared how Viet Nam can build on existing policies and frameworks to meet the new and emerging requirements. The association also noted the payment for ecosystems services were one of the most successful examples of the country adopting deforestation initiatives.

Colombia shared its experiences in reversing forest loss and degradation and deforestation-free production as the third largest coffee producer in the world. The significance of coffee to the country's economy was highlighted, as well as the need to protect the well-being of coffee growers and nature.

The discussions contained a number of converging points, which are described in the paragraphs that follow.

Instead of introducing completely new policies, laws, regulations and programmes to meet the new and emerging international requirements such as the EU deforestation-free regulation, the next step is to demonstrate how existing enabling environments and systems could be connected to these regulations, and how they could be enhanced to promote direct changes for innovative transformation to tackle climate change and deforestation.

More than ever, stakeholders (e.g. users and buyers), and financial institutions have a more prominent role in shaping the market and sustainable and responsible consumption that will drive sustainable production and supply chains.

Smallholder farmers and producers will be the most affected if sustainable and deforestation-free regulations are applied due to the expensive and stringent due diligence process. Therefore, measures need to be incorporated to support and protect these vulnerable groups.

The business case for deforestation-free products is clear and becoming stronger. From the demand side, more clients and industry actors are publicly committing not to buy products that cause deforestation and are willing to comply with stringent regulations to ensure their sustainable sourcing areas. From the supply side, producers

should no longer rely on easy-to-do options and markets but should develop more productive yet sustainable farming methods to increase the value of business, access better markets and finance, and comply with new market regulations.

It is crucial to create an enabling environment for a sustainable deforestation-free agricultural product supply chain and to support the deforestation-free production and commercialization model for the benefit of the environment and people, particularly smallholders. International organizations such as UNDP are ready to work with government partners and the private sector toward the sustainable pathway.

## Side event 9: True cost accounting in action: creating roadmaps to measure and drive food systems transformation

### Organizers:

**True Cost Accounting (TCA) Accelerator, WWF, Global Alliance for the Future of Food**

### Summary

The transformation of food systems is critical to put the world back on track to meet the SDGs by 2030. But hidden costs — and undervaluation of beneficial practices — hamper our ability to identify the solutions needed to effectively meet the SDGs and other global commitments.

This side event featured recent case studies that demonstrate TCA's potential to identify more effective policy solutions by considering costs and benefits from food system interventions across four capitals (human, social, natural and economic) while revealing dependencies critical to productivity and resilience.

João Campari (WWF) provided an overview of the wide-ranging food system externalities excluded from conventional economic and policymaking instruments. Jenn Yates (TCA Accelerator) then shared the widely adopted definition and framework for TCA assessments developed through collaborative processes, notably the UNEP TEEB-AgriFood Evaluation Framework, before introducing two recent applications of TEEB-AgriFood in Thailand and India.

Salman Hussain (UNEP) described UNEP's collaboration with the Thai government to understand the potential trade-offs of expanding organic rice production. Researchers evaluated a baseline scenario against three increasingly ambitious targets for organic conversion and found not only higher levels of biodiversity and an overall reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from increasing acreage of organic rice production, but enormous savings and benefits to human well-being from improved air quality — with negligible yield impacts over time.

Swati Renduchintala (World Agroforestry Centre) described research using TEEB-AgriFood to compare four farming systems common to Andhra Pradesh, India: an approach known as Andhra Pradesh Community-Managed Natural Farming; low-input tribal farming; low-input rainfed farming; and high-input farming. The study measured major economic, social and health impacts and found equal or higher yields on the community-managed natural farming fields, alongside higher crop diversity, higher net incomes, and improved health outcomes, compared with farms using chemical-based fertilizers and pesticides. The assessment, conducted in coordination with subnational government leaders, showed the value of moving beyond yield-based metrics for evaluating success.

Both studies offer insights for policymakers seeking to support farming systems that improve human and planetary health, and to advance progress toward SDGs and other global commitments.

This message was echoed by policy leaders, who identified TCA as a priority to guide country actions as we confront multiple planetary crises. Jose Valls Bedeau (FAO) shared FAO's decision to feature TCA in two consecutive years of its flagship State of Food And Agriculture report, moving from an overview of TCA's potential to evaluate food systems in 2023 to empirical applications of TCA as a tool to support decision-making in 2024. Ulf Jaeckel (German Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety) cited his country's financial support for TCA studies and its exploration of this approach to address food-sector climate impacts.

The session included lively participation from the in-person and online audience, including discussion of TCA applications at a variety of scales (e.g. city, national). Participants developed a greater understanding of how TCA can create a roadmap for leaders toward decisions that have maximum value for people and the planet.

## Side event 10: Harnessing the potential of agroecology in Southeast Asia to transform food systems to become sustainable

### Organizers:

Viet Nam Academy of Agriculture Science

### Co-organizers:

**CIRAD, FAO, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, IPSARD (Viet Nam), General Directorate of Agriculture (Cambodia), Swisscontact, GRET, Institut de Recherche pour le Développement as partners of the Agroecology and Safe Food Systems Transition project and in the Malica and Agroecology in South-East Asia research platforms in partnership, in collaboration with the Governments of Lao Lao People's Democratic Republic, Viet Nam and Cambodia, and together with the Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF), the Agroecology Coalition, and the Transformative Partnership Platform on Agroecology**

### Summary

This event, co-moderated by CIRAD (Dr Estelle Biénabe) and FAO (Pierre Ferrand), explored agroecological innovations and initiatives as a key approach for food system transformation, which positively impacts a range of SDGs. Government officials from Viet Nam and Cambodia together with senior agroecology experts delivered updates on national policies and shared experiences from Southeast Asian countries, attracting 50 on-site and 100 online participants.

In his opening remark, Dr. Dao The Anh, Vice-President VAAS, introduced the recently approved Viet Nam National Action Plan on Food System Transformation. Agroecology is considered an important driver to achieve the plan's objectives of transparency, responsibility and sustainability by 2030.

While presenting the 13 principles of agroecology,<sup>5</sup> Dr. Fergus Sinclair, Chief Scientist of CIFOR-ICRAF and Co-convenor of Transformative Partnership Platform on Agroecology, pointed out the scalability potential of agroecology. He mentioned that scale is not only about the size of the farms but also about scaling in numbers; and this relates to whole approaches of innovation, bringing research and development together, and obtaining evaluations of technology from millions of farmers. As an example, he referred to the [Million Voices initiative](#), which mobilizes citizen science to support agroecological transitions.

Sharing experiences from Cambodia, H.E. Dr. Saruth Chan, Under-Secretary of State for the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Cambodia, made clear the need for and critical role of national multistakeholder platforms to be able to quickly act upon directions and recommendations from the global level, and evidence and learnings from grassroots dynamics. Such platforms help convey messages to high-ranking officials and provide implementation mechanisms. This was clearly illustrated through the [Conservation Agriculture and Sustainable Intensification Consortium](#).

In the open discussion, Ms. Esther Penunia, Secretary General of the [Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development](#), highlighted the clear convergence between the association's priority agenda and the 13 principles of agroecology. Dr. Estelle Biénabe, CIRAD, stressed the need for explicit agroecological principles that can serve as actionable statements, but also generic enough not to fall into premade solutions. This echoed the issue raised by Dr. Nguyen Mai Phuong, Agroforestry Researcher at ICRAF, of a lack of common understanding about agroecology on the ground when implementing project with local stakeholders.

<sup>5</sup>HLPE of the CFS report on Agroecological and other innovative approaches for sustainable agriculture and food systems that enhance food security and nutrition, 2019.



## Side event 11: Inter-regional ministerial roundtable on digitalization for food systems transformation in Ha Noi, Viet Nam

### Organizers:

**MARD, Grow Asia, in collaboration with AGRA, Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, and the Food Action Alliance hosted by the World Economic Forum**

### Summary

This invitation-only event brought together ministers and senior officials from 21 countries for a special roundtable discussion on how to advance sustainable investment, innovation and digitalization opportunities in food systems through enhanced South–South Cooperation. The high-level dialogue involved the participation of more than 40 senior officials from the global south and collaborators from the global north.

The roundtable underscored the need for countries in Africa, Asia and the Americas to establish a visionary framework for South–South Cooperation to drive food systems transformation. Participants recognized that collaboration across regions, in mobilizing resources and other means of implementation, measurement, research and innovation is essential to transforming food systems to make them more inclusive, resilient and sustainable. Topics covered in the roundtable included experiences of successful strategies for driving agricultural digitalization in Viet Nam and other countries (e.g. Ethiopia, Ghana) and the role of regional guidelines and multi-country interventions in the ASEAN, which are vital for unlocking catalytic and sustainable investments from the private sector. The roundtable also discussed progress made in advancing national development frameworks through mainstreaming food systems strategies and business cases in African countries (e.g. Ghana, Malawi, Rwanda), where such interventions are already improving incomes and livelihoods of small businesses and rural communities, while ensuring food and nutrition security in the context of climate change. Other topics raised for potential South–South Cooperation included priorities around women’s economic empowerment, youth employment and entrepreneurship and inclusive coordination mechanisms.

Recognizing the significant opportunity that a framework for enhanced South–South Cooperation presents for countries in Africa, Asia and the Americas, the organizers concluded the roundtable and bilateral sessions with a call to action for consolidated funding, and an agreement to use their collective leadership to accelerate coordinated activities on food systems transformation on the pathway towards major events that will shape the global food system agenda in the months and years ahead. These events include the UN Food Systems Stocktaking Moment in July 2023, the Africa Food Systems Summit in September 2023, the COP28 in November 2023 and other regional and global events. To further enhance South–South solidarity, the organizers also highlighted the importance of 12 September, the United Nations’ Day for South–South Cooperation. To mark the occasion, which will coincide with the annual flagship Grow Asia Investment Forum in Singapore, all partners stressed the need to use their substantive reach, partnerships and connections to continue exploring knowledge-sharing opportunities and to scale the impact of their most successful projects through targeted commitments and resource mobilization for South–South Cooperation.

More information on the event can be found at the official [Joint Statement](#) from the event and information on host organizations from the [Food Action Alliance](#), [Grow Asia](#), [AGRA](#), and [IICA](#).

## VIRTUAL SIDE EVENTS

This section presents the summaries of the virtual side events as provided by their organizers.

### Virtual side event 1: Modernizing mindset and operating models for food system actors

#### Organizers:

**Rural PM**

#### Summary

Five speakers assisted the online side event to share their approaches on global food systems. During the 90 minutes of debate, several engaging discussions emerged around questions such as:

- What does today's food system landscape look like, and how do organizations adapt to today's fragile and unpredictable landscape conditions?
- What are the main drivers that shape the mindset of organizations in the food system landscape, and how do they impact their decision-making processes?
- How do culinary professionals prepare their skillset toward making sustainable decisions that contribute to the new business models?
- How do we envision future food scenarios (concepts such as regenerative, alternative proteins, mycelium, cellular, food as medicine)?
- What does a sustainable food system look like in the future and how do we get there?
- How can policy and regulatory frameworks be used to incentivize and support mindset and operating model transformation in the food system?
- How do organizations measure and assess the outcomes of their actions in terms of social, environmental, and economic impacts? How can a Social Return on Investment analysis be used?
- What are the potential trade-offs between economic growth, social equity and environmental sustainability in the food system, and how can these be navigated?

Speakers described a number of practical examples and transformation approaches on the food system landscape that could potentially accelerate new initiatives and partnerships.

Overall, the panel debate encapsulated important topics in food ecosystem transformation, including: the current food system landscape; the corporate-enterprise mindset of food production; alternative proteins structures, mycoprotein, cellular food as medicine; sociocultural aspects of food; chefs' points of view; the importance of menu engineering; healthy diets before vs now; foodtech and agritech innovation, policy and regulatory frameworks; commercialization "valley of death"; climate investments and decision making on food, education and upscaling of food system actors; taxation and restrictions on growth/consumption; social return on investment; measurements and indicators of organizational performance; and organizational transformation recipes.

### Virtual side event 2: Transforming territories: the approach of organic districts as living laboratories for inclusive sustainable food systems

#### Organizers:

**Organic Food System Programme, together with the international research association Organic Food Quality and Health, Building Ecological Recycling Agriculture and Societies International Foundation, and the Global Alliance for Organic Districts**

#### Summary

The event featured 13 speakers from around the world who presented their approaches to organic food systems. Seventy participants from all five continents joined the online event, representing academia, businesses and public institutions.

The event offered insights into how organic districts transform food systems locally and realize the economic and sociocultural potential of their communities, based on organic principles and practices. These show an inclusive and holistic mindset followed up by concrete actions. The event was divided in two main sections. The first focused on policy, science, training and capacity building, and practice. The second presented snapshots from organic districts from all five continents.

During the event, there was lively interaction in the chat. At the end, discussions were opened up and a short wrap-up was conducted. Among the comments were individuals describing additional organic food systems that were



already in progress, which had not been brought to our attention prior to the event. Another positive outcome of the side event is the opportunity to coordinate and consolidate knowledge and global movement in order to normalize and integrate organic approaches towards societal transformation. Additionally, the 150 participants who registered for the event will be included in these efforts.

A noteworthy discussion arose regarding the formation of Organic Districts and the need for outcome measurements. It was determined that the formation and development of Organic Districts depend on the people who are committed to making a change in their respective regions. However, there is also a need for specific structures, strategies, evidence, and monitoring to establish an Organic District. One recommendation from the meeting was to establish a global task force that proposes metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) based on existing guidelines, toolkits, and monitoring resources. These recommendations can then be presented to policy makers and stakeholders to highlight the benefits of Organic Districts as living laboratories for inclusive and sustainable food systems that contribute to the transformation we need.

### **Virtual side event 3: Report launch: Who's tipping the scales? Rebalancing power for democratic food system governance**

#### **Organizers:**

**The International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems (IPES-Food)**

#### **Summary**

Deep power asymmetries in food system governance block the transformation we need. On April 25, 2023, the International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems (IPES-Food) hosted this virtual side event/webinar, which marked the publication of a new report by IPES-Food, *Who's Tipping the Scales?*, that critically examines the power imbalances in decision-making about the food we grow and eat and proposes transformative solutions to democratize food governance.

Molly Anderson, IPES-Food Panel Member and Food Studies Chair at Middlebury College, and Lim Li Ching, IPES-Food Co-chair and Senior Researcher at Third World Network, presented the findings from the report. They described the outsized influence that transnational corporations have on food system governance and the new ways in which decision-making processes on food are being captured by private interests. Corporate influence over food systems governance has become the new normal, with very little debate and inquiry from the public, state and UN institutions. This has been the result of a long process of transition from public-centered governance processes to stakeholder-centered governance processes, or multistakeholder processes, whereby corporations, academia, NGOs, farmers and governments all have a seat at the table in food governance processes, without acknowledging or addressing power imbalances among these groups.

In recent years, multistakeholder initiatives, such as public-private partnerships, have become a key mechanism in global food governance, including in UN settings. Furthermore, due to national and international crises in public funding, many UN institutions have been forced to seek funding from private actors. Corporate partnerships now provide key sources of funding for global food governance institutions, while at the same time providing corporations with an inside track on decision-making.

Partnerships between private sector actors and international food governance bodies create serious conflicts of interest, with problems arising during governance processes and outcomes, and concerning accountability. The types of solutions that emerge through corporate-dominated processes are often weak and ineffective in tackling the root cause of the problems they seek to address; moreover, they avoid rules that hold firms to account for practices that cause harm to people and nature, and do not address power imbalances.

Renewed efforts are underway to rein in corporate influence and hold corporations accountable for human rights abuses, but these actions are incomplete, insufficient and stifled by powerful governments and firms.

To build resilient, sustainable and equitable food systems, we need to fundamentally level the playing field in food system decision-making. First, we need to address the outsized influence of transnational agrifood corporations at all levels of food systems, including holding corporations accountable for human rights violations and environmental destruction. Second, we need to democratize food governance to serve the public interest. And third, we need to build up autonomous processes and spaces that centre the voices, claims and proposals of people's organizations and social movements. The transformation we need requires shifting the balance of power from corporations to communities.

## Virtual side event 4: Urban and peri-urban agriculture for resilient, sustainable and inclusive food systems: multiple benefits of urban and peri-urban agriculture for the transformation of urban food systems

### Organizers:

FAO, RUAFA, Rikolto, UNEP

### Summary

This side event aimed to demonstrate the role of urban and peri-urban agriculture (UPA) in fostering resilient, sustainable and inclusive food systems. It brought together experts, practitioners and city representatives to share experiences, best practices and insights on integrating UPA into urban planning for transformative change.

Guido Santini, FAO Programme Coordinator, opened and moderated the event, stressing the urgency of addressing the compounding impacts of climate change, public health crises, and geopolitical challenges on food systems. He introduced the [Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture Sourcebook](#) by FAO, Rikolto and RUAFA, a comprehensive guide for local decision-makers, policy advisors, urban planners, specialists, practitioners and others involved in the design and implementation of production schemes, urban food strategies, and policies concerning agriculture in urban and peri-urban areas.

René van Veenhuizen, Senior Programme Manager at RUAFA, highlighted the manifold social, economic and environmental benefits of UPA, such as diversifying food sources, shortening supply chains, and connecting producers directly with consumers. Marina Bortoletti, Associate Programme Officer at UNEP, emphasized UPA's role in achieving sustainability goals, including climate change mitigation, economic development, and biodiversity conservation, drawing on a [recent report by the International Research Panel and UNEP](#).

The centrepiece of the event was a roundtable discussion, featuring representatives from cities around the globe who shared success stories, best practices and challenges in integrating UPA. Pius Sugeng Prasetyo from the University of Parahyangan in Bandung, Indonesia, highlighted the importance of national support to scale up UPA initiatives. Margret Semwanga and Manon Obarowski, representing Kampala Capital City Authority, Uganda, emphasized the need for a framework to integrate UPA into national agricultural policies. Mandresy Rakotoarison from the Municipality of Antananarivo, Madagascar, demonstrated the significance of multistakeholder partnerships in linking urban farmers with school canteens. Shulang Fei from the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences in Chengdu, China, showcased how technology and innovation attract young people to UPA. Samuel Ikua, representing the Mazingira Institute and RUAFA in Nairobi, Kenya, showed how the city's institutional framework for coordination enables UPA integration into urban planning.

Charlotte Flechet, Global Programme Director – Food Smart Cities at Rikolto, summarized the transformative potential of UPA in building urban resilience and transitioning to a more circular, integrated and efficient food system. She underscored the importance of inclusive decision-making processes, urging the involvement of vulnerable groups. Documenting the benefits of UPA and consolidating data are deemed crucial to quantify its contributions and promote its recognition as a viable solution. Furthermore, UPA's integration into urban planning and policy frameworks was emphasized as a crucial step in ensuring long-term land allocation for urban agriculture. Flechet called upon public and private funders to support capacity building of stakeholders on the ground and the implementation of city-specific urban agendas. Finally, she concluded by highlighting the key role of national governments in creating conducive conditions by deepening decentralization processes, providing guiding policy frameworks, building local capacities, and transferring resources to ensure the successful development and implementation of UPA policies and initiatives.

The side event provided a platform for showcasing the potential of UPA as a tool for integrated planning and transformation of urban food systems. It highlighted the importance of incorporating UPA into urban planning and policymaking to build resilience against the impacts of climate change and other challenges. By fostering inclusivity, generating evidence and synergizing support from various stakeholders, UPA can contribute to resilient, sustainable and inclusive food systems, ensuring a brighter future for urban communities.

## Virtual side event 5: Short circuits of healthy and sustainable food retail that oppose the global syndemic of obesity, undernutrition and climate change

### Organizers:

Idec, Instituto Comida do Amanhã and Ministry of Development and Social Assistance, Family and Fight against Hunger

### Summary

This side event brought a rich exchange of experiences and a set of best practices to face the various consequences of current hegemonic food systems on the health of people and the planet. With different perspectives, speakers were able to address what they consider to be the main challenges and the most cost-effective strategies. From structuring policies, which touch on fundamental issues such as inequalities, gender, access to land and promotion of health, to the power of consumers in defending the human right to adequate food, and the critical role of municipalities and their policies (closer to the territory and its daily dynamics).

Kamyla Borges, from Instituto Clima e Sociedade, opened the event and presented the serious context we are facing, and the need for multiple and coordinated efforts that can reverse a path that has been proving to be harmful for everyone and our planet. From a consumer rights perspective, Janine Coutinho (Idec) emphasized that undernutrition, obesity and climate change are concurring phenomena that feed off each other and share the same determinants, constituting a global syndemic. She explained how the transition to diets that are increasingly based on ultra-processed foods is also directly associated with the commoditization of food and the interference of large corporations in decisions that should focus exclusively on public health and the climate. Monica Guerra, from the Instituto Comida do Amanhã, drew attention to the fundamental role of cities in the creation and implementation of strategies, since cities are home to 70 percent of all food consumption and 70 percent of all waste related to food, and are also responsible for a large part of greenhouse gas emissions. She underscored that it is not possible to aim at transformations without reflecting on and developing strategies and policies that focus on urban centres and populations. Gisele Bortolini added that it is the role of the State to coordinate and set in motion the transformation of the existing food system into a healthier, more sustainable and more resilient food system. Among the set of policies that the Brazilian government is gradually resuming and renewing, there is also the concern to improve the governance of food and nutritional security policies at the federal, state and municipal levels, to guarantee, among other things, the participation of civil society. We can only move forward if we work together.

## Virtual side event 6: Multistakeholder collaboration for more sustainable food systems in the Mediterranean

### Organizers:

Sustainable Food Systems in the Mediterranean (SFS-MED) Platform

### Summary

This side event highlighted how cross-country and multistakeholder collaboration can make the Mediterranean region a virtuous example of regional cooperation for food systems transformation.

Walking the talk of the Summit, the [SFS-MED Platform](#) (a joint effort of FAO, International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM), Union for the Mediterranean and Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) as an OPN SFS Programme affiliated project) fosters dialogue in and across Mediterranean countries to support them in cementing the action for food systems transformation towards the Stocktaking Moment of July 2023, translating international efforts into actionable solutions at national level.

Mindful that food systems and food security have a direct impact on the overall stability of the region and in the wake of the recent global crisis, Mediterranean countries are playing a key role in advancing collaboration among stakeholders and different agrifood sectors. Looking at all dimensions of sustainability, multisectoral actions need to take into consideration the interdependency of challenges to be tackled, as well as the different contexts and specificities of this region.

The National Convenors of Albania, Egypt, Jordan and Morocco illustrated how they are working to build more sustainable food systems and integrating such efforts into their national development strategies. Among the actions presented were: inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral collaboration (establishment of multistakeholder coordination mechanisms); promotion of sustainable practices (e.g. organic and eco-friendly production, agrotourism) to decrease pressure on natural resources and tackle food loss and waste; social protection measures (e.g. subsidies, school feeding programmes) and adoption of human-right based approaches (e.g. right to food, right to natural resources); awareness-raising activities; and public-private partnerships.

Regional cooperation once again emerged as essential to address the interconnected development challenges (food security above all) and fill the gaps in terms of technology transfer and insufficient funding and investments, which are essential to enable food systems transformation and integrate these efforts into the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. In this regard, speakers in the panel representing the European Union, CIHEAM, PRIMA, European Neighbourhood Instrument Cross-Border Cooperation in the Mediterranean, and Ente per le Nuove tecnologie, l'Energia e l'Ambiente confirmed their organizations' readiness to facilitate coherent and coordinated mobilization of financial, technical and human resources through partnerships, dedicated instruments and programmes (such as the European Union's Global Europe and Horizon, PRIMA) that involve both the public and private sectors. There is a need to adopt systemic approaches in resource and technology mobilization to ensure the transdisciplinary innovation and multistakeholder collaboration necessary to enable food systems transformation.

The SFS-MED Platform focuses on building the connections needed to generate innovative ideas, identify levers for change, and achieve food systems transformation towards sustainability. The Platform provides the framework to connect stakeholders to address the multiple and interconnected challenges, linking sustainable consumption and production using the Mediterranean diet among the levers of change to overcome fragmentation of interventions and ensure coherent and coordinated actions. To support the achievement of multiple outcomes, the Platform offers a forum for dialogue and regional collaboration, working at regional, national and local levels and with stakeholders from the public and private sectors, striving to enable the transformation we need for more sustainable food systems to accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda in the Mediterranean.

## **Virtual side event 7: Pursuing win-wins for nutrition and the environment through a food systems approach : lessons from cities and their surroundings**

### **Organizers:**

**Costa Rica, the Swiss Confederation, UN-Nutrition, UNEP, ICLEI, Rikolto and RUAH-Hivos**

### **Summary**

This side event provided an opportunity to delve into strategies and actions that can and are being taken in different areas around the world to generate co-benefits for nutrition and the environment as part of the food systems transformation agenda.

Roberto Azofofeifa from the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock in Costa Rica opened the side event by highlighting the complexity of food systems, the importance of metrics and the need for multistakeholder collaboration to safeguard people's nutrition and natural resources.

Stineke Oenema, the UN-Nutrition Executive Secretary, moderated the event and introduced a new discussion paper, "Nutrition and the environment – Nurturing people, protecting the planet, emphasizing the need to change the current 'vicious' cycle into a 'virtual' one." James Lomax, from UNEP, presented the main findings from the paper. He called attention to the growing evidence that the triple planetary crisis is exacerbating nutrition challenges, with the most vulnerable being the most affected. He highlighted how food systems are both key drivers and victims of climate change and described some of the synergies and policy options discussed in the paper. He explained how shifting to diets that incorporate more varied and nutritious food can help improve human and planetary health and measures that can be taken at every stage of the food system to promote innovative and sustainable practices. He also mentioned the recent emission gap report and the need to strengthen urban–rural linkages.

Different country experiences were then presented. Tom Arnold, Tom Arnold, Special Envoy on Food Systems (2021–2022) for Ireland, drew on his experience from developing Food Vision 2030, Ireland's agrifood strategy, and discussed the prioritization of coherent food and health policies to deliver improved environmental and health outcomes. Igor Barcellos spoke on behalf of Adilson Pires, the Municipal Secretary and the city of Rio de Janeiro, focusing on the reconnection of Brazil's national and federal level governance and local policies being used to curb global warming and the hunger crisis, including the use of pesticides and community kitchens. Rose Achieng, the Agri-Nutrition Coordinator in Kisumu County, Kenya, spoke about rapid urbanization and the need to consider the investment, production and consumption dimensions of healthy diets in the transition to sustainable food systems. Nyoman Suma Artha, Director of Pasar Rakyat in Bali, provided insight into the challenges that smallholder farmers face and solutions, such as regenerative agriculture, to rebalance ecosystems and build value chains for organic farming based on local traditions in Indonesia. Runyararo Esther Chibota, the Hivos Regional Coordinator, spoke about experiences in Zimbabwe, including the growing popularity of ultra-processed foods and the need to change the perception of youth in order to promote healthy diets in the context of climate change.

After a thought-provoking question-and-answer segment, Nancy Aburto, Deputy Director of the Food and Nutrition Division at FAO, summed up the panel discussion by emphasizing that agricultural intensification is reducing biodiversity and leading to dietary homogenization and making the connection to FSS coalitions.

# ANNEX 1 - OUTCOME DOCUMENT OF THE 4TH GLOBAL CONFERENCE OF THE ONE PLANET NETWORK'S (10YFP) SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS (SFS) PROGRAMME

## THE TRANSFORMATION WE NEED

### *Emerging from global crises by shaping sustainable, resilient, healthy, and inclusive food systems*

April 28th, 2023

On 24-27 April 2023, more than 350 participants gathered in Ha Noi (Viet Nam) with the **aim to make a substantial contribution to the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit's (UNFSS) follow-up process up to 2030**. Participants included Ministers and Vice-Ministers from eight different countries from four different global regions, other members of the One Planet network, National Convenors and further actors involved in the UNFSS follow-up process, as well as multiple stakeholders from all world regions. Building on the outcomes of the UNFSS, and the SFS Programme's expertise and tools as well as the outcomes of its previous three global conferences, the conference functioned as a major milestone towards the first Stocktaking Moment organized by the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, taking place on 24-26 July 2023.

The **objectives** of the conference were:

- To **present transformational actions**, tools and initiatives that have emerged since the UNFSS with a view to promoting their uptake and upscaling in national and local policy-making processes;
- To **further promote the food systems approach and inclusive governance** and collaboration at all levels – including multilateral and particularly Rio Conventions – to foster their uptake for the development of multi-sectoral action plans towards sustainable consumption and production in food systems; and
- To **provide a space** for National Convenors, UNFSS coalitions and other relevant multi-actor initiatives as well as other food systems actors, **to build capacities and deepen their collective efforts towards sustainable food systems pathways**, in view of the UNFSS 2023 Stocktaking Moment.

The conference looked at successes and opportunities as well as main barriers and bottlenecks concerning food systems transformation, with a focus on five key levers of change:

- Global, regional, national, and sub-national inclusive governance to lay the foundation for applying a holistic/integrated approach towards sustainable and healthy food systems;
- Collaborative, multisectoral, integrated policies based on a holistic approach to advance the transformation we need: improving consumption and production patterns in our food systems;
- Mobilizing means of implementation, including science, finance, human rights and innovation;
- Monitoring and accountability frameworks to measure transformation, supported by metrics and data; and
- Research and innovation, including in collaboration with the private sector.

When discussing these key levers of change, the conference participants:

- Shared experiences and identified specific needs and actionable solutions, in support of the National Pathways for Food Systems Transformation, as further summarized in this document.
- Recalled the call from the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit to mainstream the food systems approach – a holistic approach towards more sustainable, resilient, inclusive and equitable food systems, delivering nutritious and safe foods for healthy diets while considering all relevant causal variables of a problem and all social, environmental, and economic impacts of the solutions.<sup>1</sup>
- Further recalled the Secretary-General's Chair Summary and Statement of Action on the UN Food Systems Summit that called on Member States to drive action at country-level in their local contexts including throu-

<sup>1</sup>For definitions of terms sustainable food systems and food systems approach, refer to: Sustainable Food Systems Programme. 2020. Towards a Common Understanding of Sustainable Food Systems. Available at: [https://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/sites/default/files/sfs\\_programme\\_glossary\\_towards\\_a\\_common\\_understanding\\_of\\_sfs\\_2020.pdf](https://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/sites/default/files/sfs_programme_glossary_towards_a_common_understanding_of_sfs_2020.pdf)

gh mechanisms that develop and implement national pathways to 2030 that are inclusive and consistent with countries' climate commitments.

- Further recalled the Ministerial Declaration of the 2022 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), calling upon all actors to implement the voluntary commitments of the UNFSS including the national pathways and coalitions of action, as appropriate, building on regional and national priorities and respecting national policies and priorities; as well as the 2022 HLPF Ministerial Declaration recognizing the One Planet network as an important implementation mechanism for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and calling upon all stakeholders to adopt a sustainable food systems approach to promote sustainable consumption and production.
- Further recalled the Ministerial Declaration of the United Nations Environment Assembly at its fourth session, where Member States affirmed they will “promote sustainable food systems by encouraging the implementation of sustainable and resilient agricultural practices, improving value generation, and significantly reducing waste and energy use along the food supply chain to help ensure food security and ecosystem functions and services.”
- Further recalled the 2021 G20 Matera Declaration, emphasizing the need for collaborative multisectoral action to strengthen and support resilient and sustainable health, social protection and food systems, and address risks emerging from the human-animal-environment interface.
- Further recalled the 2022 OECD Agricultural Ministers Declaration, emphasizing the urgent need for a transformation towards more sustainability and resilience to address the triple challenge facing agriculture and food systems of ensuring food security and nutrition for a growing global population; addressing environmental challenges, including climate change and biodiversity loss; and providing opportunities for livelihoods for all farmers, including family farmers, and others employed along food supply chains.
- Further recalled the final communiqué of the 2023 Global Forum on Food and Agriculture, in which Ministers committed to promote sustainable, inclusive, efficient and resilient food systems by enabling the agricultural and food sectors to produce sustainably, adapt to new conditions, enhance their ability to deal with risks, close the inequality gap, and recover quickly and better from crises.
- Further recalled the Report of the 50<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), in which members called on leveraging the convening power of the CFS to strengthen coordinated global policy responses to the multiple dimensions of the global food crisis.
- Stressed the urgency to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the SDGs by 2030, the Paris Agreement, and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, highlighting the important contribution that the implementation of National Pathways for Food Systems Transformation can make in that regard.

**The following three overall conference conclusions were highlighted throughout the different sessions of the conference:**

- 1** *The importance of food systems transformation for coping with multiple challenges:* sustainable, resilient, healthy and inclusive food systems are urgently needed and are a precondition to address the interrelated crises of food insecurity, malnutrition, health, climate change, biodiversity loss, conflict, as well as high energy and consumer prices;
- 2** *The need to link short-term and long-term efforts:* while it is sometimes necessary to take short-term action to tackle multiple crises, such action should be conducted in the framework of a long-term strategy and a holistic and inclusive approach to food systems governance and policy making; and
- 3** *The need for inclusiveness, participation and meaningful collaboration at all levels:* food systems transformation is a whole-of-society task that requires engagement and effective participation of all actors across all sectors, leaving no one behind.



## CONFERENCE SESSIONS CHAIRS' SUMMARIES

This section reflects speakers' key messages and discussions during each of the conference sessions as summarized by session chairs and rapporteurs. The conference sessions were conceived with the aim to make a substantial contribution to the UNFSS follow-up process up to 2030, in view of the first Stocktaking Moment taking place on 24-26 July 2023. Thus, these messages are addressed primarily to high-level political leaders, decision-makers, business leaders, but also to food systems stakeholders at large, who are involved in the development and implementation of National Pathways for Food Systems Transformation.

### Rethinking the global governance architecture for food systems

- The current global governance architecture for food systems is fragmented, as it has grown over time and in the absence of a systems lens. The future global governance architecture needs to be rethought in order to consider a food systems approach.
- To avoid unintended consequences, global policy instruments should be implemented at the national level with a coherent and holistic perspective.
- Trade can be supportive of sustainable and resilient food systems, by creating global market opportunities and enhancing food security, particularly for countries that rely on imports. However, trade liberalization can also bring new trade-offs, such as a decline of local production and longer supply chains.
- Investments in sustainable food systems should become part of the standard portfolios of financial institutions. The National Pathways should be used as a basis for anchoring investment expectations to help shift global finance towards food systems transformation.
- Both Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) of the Paris Agreement and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework should consider a food systems approach and include ambitious targets, reaching from production to consumption.
- The UN Food Systems Coordination Hub acts as a catalyst and connector inside the UN system to support countries in translating their commitments into effective actions to reach sustainable food systems by 2030.
- As an inclusive intergovernmental policy forum on food security and nutrition, the CFS and its High-Level Panel of Experts, have a role to play in ensuring coherence, coordination and policy convergence across the different global policy processes that shape food systems at national and sub-national level.
- Through its new Global Strategy on Sustainable Consumption and Production, the One Planet network provides a UN backed multi-stakeholder platform that links to the Rio Conventions and other relevant multilateral processes.

### Revisiting national and sub-national governance and policies

Inclusive multi-stakeholder governance collaboration, in all its different forms and levels, is essential to ensure integrated policy-making in face of our joint and urgent goal to meet the 2030 Agenda for all, and to address the environmental crises that are worsening inequalities in food systems.

In most parts of the world, adoption of a systemic policy framework that considers interrelated environmental, economic, and social outcomes of food systems is still a pending task, and it requires sustained awareness-raising and capacity building.

At the same time, there is an increasing number of countries and cities that are promoting multi-stakeholder collaboration mechanisms (e.g. food councils or committees, food dialogues) as a way to move towards a food systems approach, and to create food strategies or actions that simultaneously benefit food security, environmental and socio-economic goals. Good practices include the presence of a champion, as well as the provision of funding and institutionalization of these mechanisms for their sustainability in the long term.

Coordination among and active participation of different government departments and various food systems players, both horizontal or vertical, are essential to achieve a shared vision. Success of this participatory process requires dedicated resources, in particular time, patience, data, and long-term funding.

Multi-level governance may require national governments to develop regulatory and legislative reforms that support decentralized governance and strengthen coordinated decision-making on food systems.

Effective leadership is paramount for fostering multi-actor engagement. Funding and institutionalization of multi-actor mechanisms is key to prevent and manage power imbalances and conflicts of interest.

Decision-making mechanisms should include well-defined procedures to build the trust, accountability, transparency, and confidentiality needed for managing diverging views and priorities and reaching agreements. Meaningful participation of stakeholders who have often been excluded from policy-making processes, such as Indigenous People, small-scale farmers, women, youth, informal food systems workers, etc. is essential and needs dedicated procedures, advocacy and capacity-building mechanisms for them to articulate their knowledge, concerns, and needs, and to make sure they are taken into account.

Supporting the private sector on a sustainability journey is central to multi-stakeholder collaboration.

### **Changing consumption and production patterns**

- There is an urgent need for governments and actors to implement measures to shift away from unsustainable food consumption and production. Interventions must be developed in synergy, with a focus on co-benefits, community by community.
- Governments and other actors must embrace collaboration across all levels. National Pathways can be important tools to promote coordination mechanisms among stakeholders in addressing the complexity of food systems transformation.
- An important step in the transition to sustainable food systems is to provide a fair distribution of value along the chain and ensure marginalized farmers have secure land tenure rights, which incentivize sustainable investments.
- Formal land rights alone cannot guarantee more sustainable practices. Performance-based finance has a strong role to play in rewarding good players.
- Subsidies should be reoriented to support the transition to more sustainable food systems, including through agroecological practices and other innovative approaches. Farmers must be compensated to shift towards nature positive practices.
- Governments must make sure that agri-food actors are held accountable for the negative impacts of their actions, including on the supply chain, and adopt regulations that prevent unsustainable practices and promote sustainable ones.
- Consumption behavior is currently strongly influenced by the global increase in food prices, causing growing inequalities. The global price crisis is also raising input prices for farmers. Both production challenges and consumer behavior are obstacles to diverse diets.
- Major efforts are needed to strengthen consumer awareness and understanding on the link between sustainable consumption and production, promoting interest in healthy diets from sustainable food systems.
- Inclusive business can also enable food systems transformation and should be a guiding principle in the effort towards changing food consumption and production patterns.

### **Promoting the transformation through science, finance, human rights and innovation**

- Human rights are of central importance for equitable food systems. However, progress is not happening fast enough.
- Science, innovation, human rights, and finance should be jointly promoted. Science, finance and innovation for food systems transformation should all be promoted with a human rights based approach.

There is a need for concerted efforts to strengthen capacities and increase knowledge on how to implement human rights based approaches.

- People need to be put at the center of food systems transformation by including a focus on ensuring decent incomes, protecting human rights and providing nutritious and affordable food, while addressing climate change and biodiversity loss.
- Rather than charity, the poor require an enabling policy environment with access to market systems and opportunities.
- When it comes to innovation and investment, broad and inclusive efforts are needed, including from the public and private sectors as well as academia. Ambitious public and private finance is necessary to meet the challenge.

- Women play a major role in each and every part of the food system. However, women are often engaged informally in the value chain, and therefore do not always have the same rights and tend to have more limited access to finance.
- Solutions need to be adapted to specific national contexts, with more innovation needed in terms of technologies that are customized to smallholders and the poor, while overcoming gender inequalities.
- There is a need to link National Pathways with investment strategies and pipelines with concrete business cases and clear roles for public and private finance.
- There is an urgent need to focus on implementation and action.

**Strengthening the UN Food Systems Summit's ecosystem of support: Mobilizing UNFSS coalitions to advance a food systems approach for more sustainable, resilient, and inclusive food systems**

- Coalitions of Action, which were one of the major outcomes of the UNFSS, have a significant role to play in advancing a food systems approach.
- Many coalitions focus on single aspects of transformation, without explicit consideration of interconnections of food system drivers or broader impacts. Adopting a food system lens can help link single agendas.
- By working together, coalitions can leverage their efforts to advance a holistic, inclusive food systems approach and support countries more effectively in long-term systemic change.
- Coalitions are progressing and maturing. As a collective force, they have potential to support food systems transformation, but greater efforts must be made to avoid working in silos at all levels. Duplications need to be addressed and used as opportunities for collaboration and creating synergies.
- Several countries are members of different coalitions. They can play a role in helping to build synergies for supporting transformation, including through their National Convenors.
- Efforts towards increased collaboration among coalitions must continue towards the Stocktaking Moment in July and beyond. By adopting a food system lens, the collective group of coalitions should tell a story that is greater than the sum of its parts.

**Measuring transformation**

- Accountability is critical for food systems transformation and to the UNFSS follow-up process; as such, national efforts must be strengthened to include adequate accountability provisions in planning around National Pathways, as well as globally to link to the global biennial Stocktaking Moments, and to annual SDG progress reviews.
- In addition to monitoring frameworks, instruments need to be put in place to assess and track the progress of financial flows and actions taken by the public and private sector, including development cooperation.
- Multi-stakeholder involvement is vital for designing adequate, context-relevant accountability mechanisms. Governments, the private sector, civil society, and development partners all have a crucial role and responsibilities in transitioning towards sustainable food systems.
- Progress measurement can only be achieved once a baseline level is defined. Data collection and disclosure are essential to inform the key measurement priorities for each stakeholder.
- The Stocktaking Moment should be used as an opportunity to further explore how progress will be measured and which criteria, including as related to inclusivity, are essential to assess food systems transformation.
- Data and evidence on food systems transformation are critical to strengthening accountability.

## Dialogue of National Convenors

- Food systems need to be transformed to prevent and overcome interlinked crises risking to derail action to implement the SDGs, which are currently off-track.
- To do so, it is critical to:
  - i. establish multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder processes at different governance levels, where relevant sectors are represented and stakeholders, including civil society and private sector, women, farmers, youth and Indigenous Peoples have a voice;
  - ii. strengthen policy coherence, ensuring that sectoral efforts are integrated in a systemic way to optimize synergies and identify and manage trade-offs;
  - iii. measure progress and developing accountability mechanisms to ensure alignment of efforts and that transformation goes in the desired direction;
  - iv. ensure that transformation efforts allow addressing the four “Cs” holistically: COVID-19, climate, conflict and cost of living crises;
  - v. put human health and sustainability in all its dimensions at the core of food system transformation efforts so that it effectively contributes to the SDGs.
- UN Country teams through the UN Resident Coordinator systems must be engaged and provide a space for action, deepening collective efforts towards implementing sustainable food systems pathways.
- Empowering youth, women, Indigenous Peoples, and smallholder farmers is essential to accelerate policy change more equitably and effectively, ensuring long-term transformation at the local and global levels.
- Harnessing science, technology and innovation improves the chances of countries to create a conducive policy environment leading to long-term food systems transformation.
- National Convenors and multiple stakeholders should adopt a whole-of-society approach to keep strengthening National Pathways with a rights based approach. Challenges related to allocation of budgets for cross-cutting food systems transformation objectives need to be addressed through improved inter-ministerial coordination.
- Opportunities for peer-learning among National Convenors and other stakeholders need to be strengthened, as well as science-policy interfaces, to deepen their collective efforts towards National Pathways and to report on progress made at the national level since the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit.

The organizers invite all relevant stakeholders to take into account the above key messages in the context of their National Pathways for Food Systems Transformation, and to highlight them in relevant forums and policy processes, including the 2023 Stocktaking Moment.

Furthermore, the organizers invite all members of the One Planet network’s Sustainable Food Systems Programme to promote these key messages through their respective activities.



# THE TRANSFORMATION WE NEED

EMERGING FROM GLOBAL CRISES  
BY SHAPING SUSTAINABLE,  
RESILIENT, HEALTHY, AND  
INCLUSIVE FOOD SYSTEMS