

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Thursday, 29 April 2021 15:00 GMT +02:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	The culture of food in sustainable food systems
CONVENED BY	Ambassador Giorgio Marrapodi
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/11334/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Member State
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Italy

The outcomes from a Food Systems Summit Dialogue will be of use in developing the pathway to sustainable food systems within the locality in which they take place. They will be a valuable contribution to the national pathways and also of interest to the different workstreams preparing for the Summit: the Action Tracks, Scientific Groups and Champions as well as for other Dialogues.

1. PARTICIPATION

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

176

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

19-30

31-50

51-65

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

92 Male

84 Female

Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

17 Agriculture/crops

Fish and aquaculture

Livestock

Agro-forestry

6 Environment and ecology

Trade and commerce

44 Education

3 Communication

Food processing

3 Food retail, markets

5 Food industry

3 Financial Services

12 Health care

9 Nutrition

23 National or local government

1 Utilities

Industrial

50 Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Small/medium enterprise/artisan

Large national business

Multi-national corporation

Small-scale farmer

Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

Local Non-Governmental Organization

International Non-Governmental Organization

Indigenous People

Science and academia

Workers and trade union

Member of Parliament

Local authority

Government and national institution

Regional economic community

United Nations

International financial institution

Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

Consumer group

Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

HOW DID YOU ORGANIZE THE DIALOGUE SO THAT THE PRINCIPLES WERE INCORPORATED, REINFORCED AND ENHANCED?

The session was free to attend upon registration and the links to the webinar was circulated through social media and various networks, with the aim of attracting a wide-ranging audience, including agri-food companies, allied industry, academics, researchers and advisers. Members of the panel was asked to express their thoughts on how to reach sustainability in the agri-food sector and the panellists were able to highlight any relevant work they were involved in to ensure good awareness of current activity. Questions from the audience were gathered from the chat function within Zoom and directed towards the panellists by the chair. Main themes of the dialogue were: the adoption of new ways to preserve and strengthen local food cultures, the reduction of food waste, the recovery of surpluses for a sustainable and ethical use of food through new strategies aimed at mitigating the negative impact of food production on the environment, on biodiversity, on marine ecosystems, climate, water, human and animal health. The topics of discussion presented by the different working groups were: the good practices of Italian agri-food companies for sustainable food systems; innovation and food systems: coated food with technological silk to keep it longer and reduce food waste; losses, food waste and the Mediterranean diet.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The session was organised to present positive examples of sustainable Italian companies' commitments, share scientific research findings on improving agri-food products' shelf life and to tell how losses, agri-food surpluses and domestic waste can be averted. Within the next months, two different groups of stakeholders will present (i) a shared paper on commitments of Italian agri-food companies for economic, social and environmental sustainability and (ii) a document about solutions on losses, agri-food surpluses and domestic waste. The dialogue also allowed the participants to share innovative ideas and to propose solutions capable of facilitating the transition towards more sustainable consumption models in the future with the collaboration of the main Italian players in order to make the Italian agri-food system more sustainable and resilient. Inclusiveness and openness as key elements for everyone; the journalist Alessandra Fabbretti of the DIRE agency, acted as an intermediary. The ambition was to coordinate the Italian approach on the agri-food value chains sustainability, building on existing experiences and involving main stakeholders. The range of knowledge and expertise reflected the complexity of the dialogue. Moreover, the coordinators of the proposed documents already involved, during previous preparatory meetings, all the representatives of main Italian stakeholders' associations, such as Confagricoltura, Coldiretti, Coop Italia, Federalimentare, etc., and the leading Italian companies. The ambition is that the session would be followed up in the next months by signing of a joint document to present the Italian position.

DO YOU HAVE ADVICE FOR OTHER DIALOGUE CONVENORS ABOUT APPRECIATING THE PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT?

Because in Italy there is a strong coordination and a shared vision about the sustainable food systems we want to achieve in the future, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation initially invited main stakeholders that progressively widened the audience network through their exchange of information and thanks to the social media coordination that captured different stakeholder interest, e.g. private companies. Moreover, the relevance of the involved speakers contributed to further widening the audience.

3. METHOD

The outcomes of a Dialogue are influenced by the method that is used.

DID YOU USE THE SAME METHOD AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CONVENORS REFERENCE MANUAL?

Yes

No

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

This National Dialogue, entitled "the culture of food in sustainable food systems", was organised by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation together with the Ministry of Agricultural and Forestry Policies. The dialogue aimed at collecting innovative ideas and solutions from main Italian stakeholders to contribute to enhancing the sustainability and resilience of the Italian food systems.

The dialogue brought together high ministerial representatives: it was opened by the Deputy Minister for International Cooperation, Marina Sereni and the Hon. Gian Marco Centinaio, Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies, and closed by the Director General for Development Cooperation, Ambassador Giorgio Marrapodi.

A keynote speech was delivered by Professor Jeffrey Sachs of Columbia University, about agri-food sustainability in Italy and worldwide.

In addition, a panel of experts from across the agri-food value chain sustainability topic:

- Angelo Riccaboni, University of Siena, coordinating the documents on companies' commitment,
- Benedetto Marelli, MIT, new technology for perishable food preservation;
- Andrea Segrè, University of Bologna, coordinating the activity about solutions on loss and waste;
- Marco Lucchini, Banco Alimentare, on Recovery of food surpluses and the reduction of waste;
- Bettina Prato, IFAD, Champions' Network Vice-Chair for Women and Gender issues

It was also an opportunity to present the first results of the two working groups organized in view of the Summit on food systems. The discussion focused mainly on action track 2, therefore on proposals for national commitment in the adoption of agri-food systems that can embrace all issues relating to food, the importance of enhancing production, the diversity between territories and the historical and cultural food dimension, the fight against waste. Not only were good practices shared on the sustainability of production processes and consumption models but also innovative solutions on scientific research and proposals for governance models and interinstitutional dialogue and actions aimed at improving the Italian food system.

ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- ✓ Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- ✓ Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- ✓ Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

- ✓ Finance
- ✓ Innovation
- ✓ Human rights
- ✓ Women & Youth Empowerment
- ✓ Policy
- ✓ Data & Evidence
- ✓ Governance
- ✓ Trade-offs
- ✓ Environment and Climate

MAIN FINDINGS

Main findings relate to a sustainable diet that should guarantee food security, promote healthy lifestyles, avoid food loss and waste, contribute to the reduction of environmental impacts and to the improvement of the well-being for current and future generations.

1) The good practices of Italian agri-food companies for sustainable food systems;

Three elements were at the centre of attention: food understood as identity, union, conviviality, dialogue and tradition, the importance of the Mediterranean diet and safety and food accessibility.

Traditional foods and dishes are traditional in nature, and may have a historic precedent in a national dish, regional cuisine or local cuisine. Some traditional foods have geographical indications and traditional specialities in the European Union designations: these standards serve to promote and protect names of quality agricultural products and food. Food connects people, and its preparation and consumption are activities that can bridge members of multiple generations and Italian companies are already engaging to protect these values and commit towards greater sustainability across the value chains.

2) Innovation and food systems: research and technology can help to preserve food, with the aim of extend the shelf life of agri-food products while guaranteeing food safety, reducing food waste. Food waste consist of 1/3 of the production. By recovering most of it, we can remain within a sustainable path without increasing food production.

3) Food losses, food waste and the Mediterranean diet: promoting knowledge of the values and principles that are at the roots of our food culture is our duty for future generations because this knowledge touches multiple aspects of sustainability, not only in regards to food in a strict sense, but also in regards to the whole food chain. Food loss and waste reduction can bring benefit to society as a whole by improving food security and nutrition, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and pressures on land and water resources, while increasing productivity and economic growth. It is important to note that often the most nutritious foods, by virtue of their high degree of perishability, are the most susceptible to high levels of losses of and waste. Italian companies are committing to reduce food loss and waste.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/3

The first discussion held by prof Riccaboni concerned the contribution of companies to sustainability and the role of research and innovation. Three elements were at the center of attention: food understood as identity, union, conviviality, dialogue and tradition, the importance of the Mediterranean diet and safety and food accessibility. The Italian agro-food chain was then presented, whose companies are increasingly characterized by a high fragmentation, exports, high quality, biodiversity and territoriality. Not to be missed are the positive relationships that are created within the Italian supply chain and the initiatives regarding sustainability. There was a general invitation to enhance not only the Mediterranean diet, respecting the environmental, social and economic dimension but also good practices in terms of research and innovation with the contribution of the main Italian players. Finally, a document "United in food" was illustrated which in ten points sees the commitment of Italian companies towards greater sustainability in order to be able to demonstrate their willingness to contribute to the achievement of the 17 development goals sustainable and in promoting the Italian model at the UN Summit.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/3

The second discussion topic was addressed by MIT professor Benedetto Marelli who illustrated the results of his research project being tested concerning the creation of a non-polluting biopolymer obtained from silk cocoons and used as a membrane to preserve food by reducing this way food waste. He then recalled the main objectives to ensure sustainability: the fight against obesity, the reduction of food waste and the strengthening of food security.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/3

The last discussion topic was addressed by Prof. Segrè in collaboration with Prof. Pertot of the University of Trento and with Marco Lucchini of the Food Bank Foundation. The topics covered were: the reduction of food losses; the prevention of domestic waste; the promotion of sustainable diet and greater accessibility to it; the importance of research and development for the promotion of chemical synthesis products to ensure greater sustainability within Italian crops; the need for more policies and legislation nationally and internationally and training to ensure the recovery of surpluses for ethical purposes. All these points, intended as objectives, will converge into an Italian commitment document which is being drafted and which will be presented at the beginning of June during an upcoming independent dialogue.

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

ACTION TRACKS

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KEYWORDS

- | | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> Policy |
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