

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

<b>DIALOGUE DATE</b>	Thursday, 20 May 2021 14:00 GMT +10:00
<b>DIALOGUE TITLE</b>	Future proofing our food systems - boosting resilience
<b>CONVENED BY</b>	Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
<b>DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE</b>	<a href="https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/15364/">https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/15364/</a>
<b>DIALOGUE TYPE</b>	Member State
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS</b>	Australia

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

108

## PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

19-30

31-50

51-65

66-80

80+

## PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

Male

Female

Prefer not to say or Other

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

Agriculture/crops

Fish and aquaculture

Livestock

Agro-forestry

Environment and ecology

Trade and commerce

Education

Communication

Food processing

Food retail, markets

Food industry

Financial Services

Health care

Nutrition

National or local government

Utilities

Industrial

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?

In its role as National Convenor for the Australian Food Systems Summit National Dialogues, the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment convened a series of thematic dialogues (in the form of publicly accessible virtual webinars) to facilitate open and independent discussions between a wide range of stakeholders on a variety of issues and challenges facing Australian food systems. These provided an opportunity for stakeholders to participate in meaningful discussions and promote Australian stakeholder engagement in broader UN Food Systems Summit processes. There were 81 unique webinar log-ins for the live webinar session – however we are unable to provide detailed participant metrics according to the above criteria. We can confirm that the webinar attendees reflected a broad base of stakeholder and representative groups in Australia including: not-for-profit and advocacy organisations; community groups; academia and the university sector; advertising, marketing and consultancy firms; research and development institutions; federal, state/territory and local government; private sector and industry peak body groups; farmers and farmers peak body organisations; natural resource management groups. Additionally, to promote greater outreach and accessibility for interested parties unable to attend the webinar on the day, recordings and transcripts of the session have been made available on the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment's website: <https://haveyoursay.awe.gov.au/food-systems-summit-2021>

### HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The dialogues provided an open and independent platform for Australian stakeholders to share their perspectives on a variety of issues and challenges facing Australian food systems. The dialogue sought to recognise the efforts of various Australian stakeholders (including government, industry, NGOs, thinktanks, consultants and academia) to tackle complex food systems challenges and issues through various initiatives and programs, operating at a range of scales. The dialogue brought diverse stakeholders together to discuss agri-food sector issues and encouraged the emergence of new and innovative thinking, collaborations and approaches. Furthermore, the open and publicly accessible webinar platform sought to encourage and facilitate multi-stakeholder engagement and raise awareness of UN Food Systems Summit processes amongst Australian stakeholders. There was no limits on attendees and the webinar was advertised publicly through social media platforms. The webinar was subsequently made available for both audio and video, by video recording and transcript. Discussions emerging during the dialogue reflected the need for sustained and meaningful action at all levels to give effect to the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals.

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

The 'Principles of Engagement', as outlined by the Food Systems Summit, are useful for National Food Systems Summit Dialogue Convenors, and should be considered as a useful starting point. Dialogue Convenors are encouraged to consider modalities and processes which suit their national circumstances.

# 3. METHOD

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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

The series of thematic dialogue webinars convened by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment provided an open and independent platform for Australian stakeholders including experts, academics, industry representatives, farmers, the general public and others to share experiences, ideas, opportunities and solutions on a variety of issues and challenges facing food systems. Discussions between panellists were open and transparent, and as representative as possible. Introductions and panellist presentations covered less than 30% of the available time. Four to five panellists spoke for 5 to 8 minutes each, providing an overview of the work they are engaged with. Some used Powerpoint presentations, some provided pre-recorded video presentations. Importantly, the majority of the webinar focused on the panel answering questions posed by the stakeholder audience. During the webinar, questions on a range of topics reflecting diverse stakeholder views, were received from the audience and posed to the panel for response. There was an ongoing opportunity to provide more ideas and to “keep the conversation going” following each webinar, by submitting additional thoughts and views through the Department’s Have Your Say online consultation forum, open until 10 June 2021. The webinars were independent of Australian Government processes and views. In addition the feedback provided in this form is also independent of Australian Government processes and views.

# 4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

## MAJOR FOCUS

As the second in the series of Australian National Food Systems Summit Dialogues hosted by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, the major focus of this webinar Future proofing our food systems – boosting resilience was to explore:

- the challenges and opportunities posed by future trends and risks, including climate change, potential trade and supply chain disruptions, and changing consumer patterns and demands
- how stakeholders across the food supply chain are working to adapt and increase their resilience to potential vulnerabilities, shocks and stresses to safeguard a future food system that is sustainable and stable

We were pleased to have the participation of the following panellists to lead discussion:

- Peter Gooday, Assistant Secretary, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics
- Professor Mario Herrero, Chief Research Scientist of Agriculture and Food, CSIRO
- Professor Mark Howden, Director, Institute for Climate, Energy & Disaster Solutions, Australian National University
- David Eyre, CEO, Future Food Systems Cooperative Research Centre
- Doug McNicholl, Program Manager, Sustainability and Innovation, Meat and Livestock Australia
- Brianna Casey, Chief Executive Officer, Foodbank Australia

### 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

This report seeks to summarise views and perspectives of webinar participants and does not necessarily represent the views of the Australian Government.

Four expert panellists explored the webinar themes outlined previously – delivering short presentations to webinar participants. Key messages highlighted during these presentations are provided below:

- There are five key megatrends likely to influence Australian agriculture and food systems over the short, medium and long term which include:
  - the growth juggernaut in emerging Asian economies and greater demand for food and fibre and rising expectations around health, provenance and sustainability from expanded middle class consumers;
  - fractal politics and a more contested international trading landscape;
  - the need to produce more from less by ensuring continued productivity growth;
  - cascading planetary risks including climate change and other accelerated changes in earth systems creating risks and challenges but also some opportunities.
  - disruptive technologies which will alter production, supply chains and consumption patterns.
- Food systems transformation is required to effectively address environmental issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss and water impacts, as well as increased incidence of malnutrition and non-communicable diseases resulting from current food and dietary choices.
- There is a significant pipeline of technological innovations and developments which will help to re-orient food systems – however overcoming the challenges we are facing is unlikely by relying only on a “technological fix”. There is also a need to engage in dialogue and assess the contribution of values, social sciences, policies and regulation, market incentives to making positive change in our food systems and creating transition pathways.
- The impacts of climate change on agriculture in Australia are already being felt – with estimates that there has already been a decrease in productivity of around 22% due to climate change. There have been effective examples of climate adaptation to date in Australia (including in water efficiency and cropping systems) but there is work still to be done. There is a need to recognise the limits of adaptive approaches which seek to increase production efficiencies and research systematic and transformational adaptation across all the elements of food systems (from R&D through to production, supply chains and consumption).
- Trade is a key means of climate adaptation and will be increasingly needed under future climates.
- There is an important role for value-adding processes in Australian food systems (including by increased development and manufacturing of “healthy” manufactured foods) and a need to better understand and recognise the benefits this offers for Australian agricultural supply chains (including expanded competitive advantage).
- Promoting collaboration between stakeholders along the supply chain (including farmers and manufacturers) will be important. Innovative models are being explored in Australia to build relationships between growers, manufacturers, service providers, logistics companies and others to improve value creation along the supply chain.

A special-feature panellist highlighted how the Australian livestock sectors are working to increase their resilience and deliver environmental, economic and socially responsible sustainability outcomes, exploring:

- The contribution of industry sustainability frameworks and the importance of economic and business models which incentivise industry stakeholders to invest in innovation which supports sustainable development pathways;
- The critical role of increased investment in R&D and stable, science-based industry and government policy that incentivises economic development, environmental stewardship and holistic wellbeing of producers, consumers and other stakeholders in the supply chain.

A second special-feature webinar panellist gave a short presentation on the role of the food-rescue and food-relief sector for helping to manage supply chain disruptions, exploring:

- How stakeholders respond adaptively and employ systems thinking approaches to overcome supply chain vulnerabilities and disruptions to get food to where it is needed in times of crisis, including in response to natural disasters.
- The barriers which prevent healthier and more appropriate food options being available to communities and the imperative to ensure that “no one is left behind”.

The question and answer session was wide-ranging and reflected strong stakeholder engagement and interest. Some key thematic elements of the discussion related to:

- the need to ensure coordination and balance between health, agricultural and environmental outcomes,
- structuring of value chains and ensuring appropriate incentives are flowing from consumers (“demand pull”) are in place to encourage producers to ‘grow the right thing’,
- the contributions of the red meat sector to increasing resilience,
- the role and growth of plant-based alternative proteins in sustainable, resilient and healthy food systems,
- the urban/rural divide and how it may exacerbate differences in valuing and understanding sustainable landscapes,
- the critical role of technology in tackling food systems issues and boosting resilience,
- the role of policy changes and power asymmetries in food systems and how to better “internalise” environmental and social impacts which are currently “externalities” in the true price of food.

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

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In addition to the topics already highlighted – there were a number of additional high-level key messages emerging during the dialogue discussion, including:

- There is a continued need to foster the development of innovative approaches, solutions, and research outcomes that meets the needs of producers, consumers and other stakeholders along the supply chain, in order to boost resilience to future shocks and vulnerabilities facing food systems.
- Approaches which emphasise the importance of collaboration will be critically important. Connected, integrated and agile food systems, which are underpinned by robust data and information networks, will be fundamental to resilient food systems, allowing stakeholders across food systems supply chains to make accurate and informed decisions to minimise the impact of future shocks and vulnerabilities.
- The flow of information and market incentives from consumers to producers (and vice versa) is an important driver of food systems development and function. It will be important to improve connectivity in the value chain to ensure it is demand driven and reflects consumer wants and values, including relating to provenance. Ensuring the right products are grown in the right regions and facilitating the path to market is important for food security for all Australians.
- Increased collaboration and relationship building between different levels of stakeholders in food systems also can bring about positive outcomes – including in the establishment of new “value-adding” industries which can strengthen the agri-food sector and its important contribution to the Australian economy. There are also many positive benefits and efficiencies to be found in further digitalisation and modernisation of the “logistics” of trading regulations and practices.
- There is a need to incorporate “systems thinking” in our decision making for our food systems. There is a need to think beyond productivity metrics and consider multiple objectives and values. This will involve a need to consider indirect impacts and trade-offs of certain actions and policies. It will be necessary to promote collaborative approaches to achieve a joint and shared vision for our food systems and the transition pathways we may embark upon to get there.

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## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

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In addition to the key messages already detailed there were a number of issues raised which may have signified a divergence of views, including:

- Consideration as to how the “true cost of food” (i.e. environmental, economic and social externalities) can be reflected in pricing structures and production and consumption patterns. Similarly, there was discussion around how best to ensure that factors such as nutrition, food safety and quality, sustainability outcomes can be systematically included as “measures of success” for our agri-food systems, beyond a the metric indicator of profit or economic return.
- How to consider food systems challenges and issues in a more holistic manner (i.e. beyond the current predominant siloed approach) and foster policy harmonization between different sectors. There are different perspectives on how best to do this and whether there is a need for new institutions/approaches – but it may involve assessing the opportunity costs and trade-offs of food production in certain regions.
- The perspective that the current structure of our food systems leads to increased rates of malnutrition and non-communicable diseases which is costly, both in terms of lost productivity but also direct costs borne by health systems.
- Consideration as to how food systems stakeholders, including producers, can best continue to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts.
- The co-existence of plant and animal protein production in the Australian agricultural sector and exploration of opportunities for mutual development and innovation.
- While there is a need to consider lower-level adaptations (i.e. incremental advances in production efficiency) there is also a need to simultaneously consider large-scale systematic and transformational adaptations which can change the “efficiency boundary” and the nature of system trade-offs (i.e. genetic technologies, supply chain modification).

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# ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

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## RELEVANT LINKS

- **Future Proofing webinar recording and transcript**  
<https://haveyoursay.awe.gov.au/food-systems-summit-2021>
- **Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment - UN Food Systems Summit 2021**  
<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/market-access-trade/un-food-systems-summit-2021>