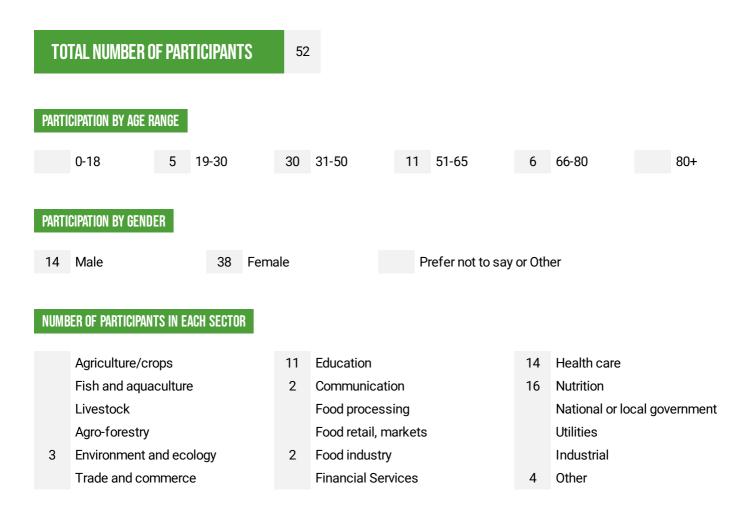
OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM



DIALOGUE DATE	Wednesday, 14 July 2021 18:30 GMT +10:00				
DIALOGUE TITLE	National dietary guidelines as a lever for attaining a healthy and sustainable food system in Australia				
CONVENED BY	Angela Genoni PhD, Nutrition & Research Development Lead, Doctors For Nutrition				
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/24864/				
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent				
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	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



NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

6	Small/medium enterprise/artisan		Workers and trade union
	Large national business		Member of Parliament
1	Multi-national corporation		Local authority
1	Small-scale farmer	6	Government and national institution
	Medium-scale farmer		Regional economic community
	Large-scale farmer		United Nations
10	Local Non-Governmental Organization		International financial institution
3	International Non-Governmental Organization		Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance
4	Indigenous People		Consumer group
12	Science and academia	7	Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

The Dialogue was organised to incorporate, reinforce, and enhance the seven principles, commencing with our curator, convenor and facilitators all attending the United Nations orientation session to gain a deep understanding of the principles. Prior to our event the Dialogue team came together to consider how we could ensure each participant was heard, develop prompts and agree on appropriate resource materials to inspire our participants. The opening keynote speakers of the dialogue highlighted the urgency of food system transformation and the importance of an inclusive system providing access to affordable and healthy diets for all. They also recognised the complexity and the need to include perspectives of multiple stakeholders. Discussion groups were intentionally diverse and introduced participants who had not previously met, fostering new connections. We welcomed a broad range of stakeholders across the food system, including science, government, agriculture, non-government organisations and the food industry, all experts in their respective fields. A webpage housing participants' biographies was shared prior to the dialogue, allowing attendees to become familiar with the work of others in their discussion group.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

All of our keynote speakers highlighted the need to act with urgency during the opening plenary. With under nine years left to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, ambitious action is required, particularly in Australia. In the latest report produced by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, Australia received the lowest score awarded to any of the 193 members of the United Nations for its level of climate action. It was also discussed during the dialogue that Australia has the highest per capita GHG emissions of G20 countries. Respect and gratitude was shown for the traditional custodians of our land. The deep connection our First Nations people have with the land and food was highlighted as an important consideration for improving our food system. A framework for enhancing food systems, that draws from Indigenous learnings, was shared as inspiration for the groups. We set out to complement the thorough work already done by a broad group of experts to establish the existing Australian Dietary Guidelines. Our intention was to build on the strong platform we already have by considering how sustainability can be elevated and implementation can be improved, to ensure the dietary guidelines are a powerful lever in transforming our food system. Beside simply inviting a broad range of stakeholders to ensure the dialogue. We look forward to continuing to build trust with all participants by inviting them to join us to share their wisdom and insights with our audience, requesting their assistance to inform our progress, and keeping them abreast of our actions.

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

• Seek engaging and reputable keynote speakers, confirmed prior to inviting participants: this enhanced participants' desire to join the conversation. • Adhere to the timeline suggested in the reference manual: ensured sufficient lead-time to balance out attendees in each discussion group, allowing for diverse backgrounds and different viewpoints. • Engage facilitators who themselves are subject experts: permitted a deeper understanding of the nuances in the conversation and the ability to use more valuable prompts. • Provide a range of stimulus materials to participants prior: acted as a useful way to drive conversation, and served as familiar ground all could express their views on. • Allocate the maximum amount of time reasonable to discussion groups: the dialogue is a unique opportunity to connect a wide array of experts, so sufficient time enabled exploration of their areas of aligned interests and divergence. • Seek permission to connect participants after the event: fostered new relationships by seeking approval prior to share contact details. • Consider how best to leverage the chat functionality for an online event: with facilitators focused on the participants speaking, also monitoring the chat proved challenging, although it did allow for more commentary from participants. A support team member on-hand to monitor and highlight key comments may be beneficial.

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

OVERVIEW: Doctors For Nutrition convened a Dialogue focusing on dietary guidelines as a lever for attaining a healthier, more sustainable and equitable food system. We (doctorsfornutrition.org) are an independent Australian health-promotion charity working to bring a 'nutrition-first' approach to mainstream medicine highlighting the benefits of whole food plant-based dietary patterns. With dietary guidelines being one of the solution areas identified under the Action Track on sustainable consumption, and the Australian Dietary Guidelines (ADGs) review process underway, our Dialogue brought together a range of local and international stakeholders to consider key issues. As well as supporting the shift to sustainable consumption patterns (Action Track 2), fit-for-purpose ADGs have a key role in ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all (Action Track 1). They should also support nature-positive production, equitable livelihoods and building resilience to food system vulnerabilities (Action Tracks 3, 4 and 5). By considering Australia as an example of a high-income country with the health and sustainability problems typical of a Western dietary pattern, this idialogue has broader implications in countries with similar consumption patterns. CONTEXT: Dietary patterns in Australia are typical of high-income countries: high in animal-derived and processed foods and low in whole plant foods. These patterns en increasaingly being taken up in low and middle-income countries (referred to as the 'nutrition transition') and are contributing to multiple crises globally, high rates of noncommunicable disease, climate change and environmental degradation, pandemic risk and antimicrobial resistance and inpacts failing disproportionately on the most vulnerable populations. In Australia we are facing a number of pressing issues • We have the highest per-capita greenhouse gas emissions among the G20 countries, and have recently scored equal-last out of 66 countries on efforts to include human health concems in our climate

ACTION TRACKS

1	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all	Finance	Policy
1	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns	Innovation	Data & Evidence
1	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production	Human rights	Governance
1	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods	Women & Youth Empowerment	Trade-offs
1	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress		Environment and Climate

KEYWORDS

Food Systems Summit Dialogues Official Feedback Form

Dialogue title Nationa

MAIN FINDINGS

Well-designed dietary guidelines based on the best available evidence, free from industry influence, have significant potential to influence improved diets. They are an example of a 'triple-duty action' that could address multiple aspects of the Global Syndemic which the Lancet (led by Dialogue keynote speaker Prof Boyd Swinburn) has defined as the interrelated global health challenges of obesity, undernutrition and climate change.

The onus is on high-income countries such as Australia to make radical shifts in diet. This requires improvements not only to the content of our current dietary guidelines but also to their implementation, which in turn necessitates urgent changes to the broader policy context.

Dietary guidelines are an aspect of governance that can contribute to equitable access to good nutrition. Both within Australia and globally, the most disadvantaged populations have the poorest diet quality and are the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and other facets of environmental degradation.

In high-income countries, where protein and calorie excess is the norm, shifts to plant foods correlate consistently and robustly with higher overall diet quality. These same shifts are not only desirable in terms of planetary health – which underpins all human health - but have been highlighted as a non-negotiable prerequisite to remaining below the 1.5°c warming threshold set by the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement, and securing a safe operating space for humanity. Without these shifts, especially in the highest-consuming nations, the Sustainable Development Goals will inevitably be undermined.

Main findings / proposals:

• The scope of evidence informing dietary guidelines must include sustainability and equity issues so that the resulting recommendations align with these goals. The development of guidelines must incorporate these concerns from the outset, and integrate them into their advice, so they are not simply a subsequent 'overlay'.

• Ensure the headline messaging is widely disseminated to reflect the scientific consensus that Australian diets need to significantly increase the ratio of plant-based and minimally processed foods to animal-sourced and highly processed foods.

· Guidelines development must be culturally responsive, reflecting diverse dietary patterns and cultural wisdom about the relationships between food, health and planet. In particular, there is scope to learn from Indigenous ways of knowing, including the multiple dimensions of health, including their cultural determinants.

• Industry interests must not have a seat at the table in the development of dietary guidelines or any other aspects of nutrition and public health policy. Australia's National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), which oversees the ADGs review, distinguishes between financial and other interests, such that industry-funded published literature is not excluded. Caution and transparency must be exercised in this regard, recognising that profit motives of harmful interests require vigilance and strong governance.

• However well-evidenced and designed, dietary guidelines are ultimately an informational instrument. This means they need to be backed up by a supportive policy environment. As such: - The ADGs should be used to underpin nutrition education, healthy food policies and sustainable agriculture. A national food

policy, currently lacking in Australia, is recommended as an adjunct to the guidelines. – Policy coherence is essential so that the dietary guidelines are not undermined by policies, regulations and programs in

other sectors such as primary production or food service, retail and marketing that increase the prevalence of unhealthy and unsustainable foods.

- Coordination across government, at all levels, has a key role in supporting an enabling environment for dietary shift. Sector leaders have a key role but industry efforts must not be left to chance: many voluntary efforts need to be further incentivised and codified.

The dietary guidelines need to be supported by an effective implementation plan including education for health professionals, school students and the public: social marketing has a key role. – Monitoring and evaluation is essential to measure progress towards implementation and drive targeted action to identify

and fill the identified gaps, leaving nobody behind.

ACTION TRACKS

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SUSTAINABILITY

Building on the context and definitions outlined in the introductory talks, this breakout group discussed the question: "What do truly sustainable Australian Dietary Guidelines look like?".

The key findings were:

• Sustainability considerations must be incorporated into dietary guidelines in a meaningful way. This means drawing on the best available evidence to inform the recommendations that they make.

• In the last revision to Australia's guidelines, a discussion on sustainability was relegated to an appendix after industry pushback. Therefore it is crucial that the NHMRC upholds its commitment to independence, transparency and management of conflicts of interest by resisting industry influence; in parallel, the public health and consumer communities have a key role in calling for the inclusion of sustainability considerations within the revised recommendations.

• Dietary guidelines should draw on best practice from around the world, using case studies such as Canada (whose plate no longer includes dairy and encourages plant-sources of protein in preference to animal sources), Finland (who have sought to align their guidelines with the Lancet's Planetary Health Diet) and several others such as Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany, Qatar, China and Brazil. Common characteristics among these guidelines are their emphasis on eating more plant foods, reducing animal foods, not exceeding energy requirements and avoiding energy-dense, nutrient-poor, ultra-processed products.

• Equity is a key aspect of sustainability. As such, dietary guidelines and associated policies must be developed with a view to redressing food inequities, by focusing on access to nutritious, culturally-acceptable food and implementing a program of effective measuring and monitoring of how dietary patterns compare to recommended patterns among socio-economic and cultural groups.

• A package and plan for dissemination of dietary guidelines is required. This includes funding and materials for health professionals (e.g. webinars, videos, other education) and social marketing to ensure the key messages reach the public. Those messages must include practical food literacy and cooking skills.

• Efforts at public persuasion must be informed by understanding of the factors that drive food choices, which include preexisting beliefs, social circles, local environmental and cultural factors, affordability, convenience and taste preferences that can stem from exposures from an early age (starting in the womb).

• Healthy and sustainable nutrition must be widely taught across the health professions so that awareness is far greater and patients are provided with a 'nutrition first' approach to disease prevention and treatment. A thorough understanding of the ADGs should be a fundamental requirement.

• Proposed introducing a Lancet Countdown Indicator that monitors and measures progress towards implementation of national Dietary Guidelines. Food+Planet (foodandplanet.org) for example are developing indicators to measure the key dimensions of sustainable diets globally. This kind of initiative has great potential as a tool for both informing and monitoring guidelines.

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IMPLEMENTATION BARRIERS

The science is clear on what constitutes a healthy and sustainable diet, but even the best guidelines cannot achieve their goals without effective implementation. This breakout group discussed the question: "What are the existing barriers to implementation and how can we overcome them?"

The key findings were:

 Complex factors beyond personal decision-making have a strong influence on dietary patterns. Participants identified influences in the following key domains:

vested interests (industry profit)

- the food environment

- tradition, expectation, social and family norms and pressures

- communication and public understanding (including the influence of media, social media, marketing and messaging by public bodies)

• Dietary guidelines have an important role as part of a wider process of food system transformation that is urgently needed. The guidelines can be a catalyst for change, as many sectors access them. If the guidelines consider the impacts of diet on the Sustainable Development Goals, it is more likely that other government portfolios start engaging with them as a lever.

 Several specific proposals related to informing, up-skilling and enabling the public to become aware of and adopt the recommendations in our revised guidelines:

- Barrier: It is not clear who the audience is for the current Australian Dietary Guidelines, and many people do not know about them. The overall messaging needs to be much clearer.

Proposed solution: Clear recommendations could be as simple as: eat more foods from plants and less processed foods. Barrier: Practical skills are currently lacking. There are certain foods that some people don't eat because they don't know

how to prepare them, e.g. legumes. Proposed solution: Guidance on how to cook healthy food at home is needed. Brazil's guidelines are a good example, which include food skills and literacy in their remit.

Barrier: unhealthy diets are socially acceptable and generally unquestioned.

Proposed solution. Part of the communication around the guideline's needs to de-normalise that way the majority of the population are eating. A key policy lever is limiting TV and digital marketing of unhealthy food to children (as Chile has done).

• The dominant framing of dietary guidelines is on personal responsibility, leaving food choices in the hands of individuals. However, dietary habits are influenced by multiple factors from age and gender to education, income and health status, food environments, culture and nutritional and cooking knowledge. There must be a reframing to recognise that policy and business bear key responsibility for system transformation rather than the individual 'consumer'. This means:

 Dietary guidelines must be reflected throughout food and nutrition policy at all levels of government.
 Healthy and nutritious meals should be showcased in settings such as educational and other public institutions, and promoted across the private sector, e.g. in workplaces and across food service outlets (noted that, in Brazil, many restaurants offer plant-predominant home-style buffet meals sold by weight that are healthy, convenient and affordable). Official public messaging must be consistent, so that dietary guidelines are the key reference document and not

contradicted by other instruments (policy coherence).

- Educational curricula must incorporate the evidence and recommendations set by dietary guidelines. This requires delivery by appropriately qualified staff.

KEYWORDS

Media and social media have a key role and responsibility to promote healthy and sustainable diets. Popular TV series such as Masterchef could be encouraged to showcase healthy plant-based and/or plant-rich dishes.

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FRESH IDEAS

This breakout group discussed the question: "What fresh ideas can we consider to drive multi-sectoral implementation?" The intent of this group was to explore best practice and innovative ideas to achieve significantly increased adherence to dietary guidelines.

The key findings were:

Financial policy instruments and pricing mechanisms have a key role in incentivising dietary shift:

- E.g. subsidies for healthy plant foods, taxation and removal of subsidies for harmful products (the concept of 'true cost accounting'). Such measures seek to internalise negative externalities rather than outsourcing them such that the

community, the environment, the healthcare system and future generations pay the price.

 A focus on affordability and accessibility: for example via redirected subsidies that bring down the price of fresh produce. Such policies should take into account the long term healthcare savings for government and institutions.

Proactive financial and practical assistance to help farmers transition to more sustainable crops/products.

 Alignment with and implementation of dietary guidelines across multiple sectors is essential: Participants highlighted a wide range of opportunities across sectors such as schools and child care; the health sector; food marketing; the local built environment; food assistance programs; agricultural and trade policy. Within this, several points were highlighted: – Multi-sectoral progress requires government action to set policy and regulations, provide guidance and lead by example, e.g. through public sector procurement and catering policies.

At minimum, all relevant sector policy should ensure alignment with dietary guidelines in preference to industry-led / voluntary schemes. Sector leaders can also take steps independently to innovate and implement best practice, for example R&D into meat and dairy alternatives with demonstrated health and sustainability advantages.

Ensuring clear and easy to understand front-of-pack labelling to help guide both healthy and sustainable food purchasing:

there is an opportunity to extend, strengthen and potentially mandate existing schemes. – Prompt steps should be taken to align catering, curricula, procurement and other programs with dietary guidelines within hospitals, schools, universities, workplaces and other institutions.

• Communication and messaging has a crucial role in supporting dietary guidelines implementation. Among key ideas, participants emphasised:

Messaging and supporting programmes should reflect what we know about behaviour change; for example encouraging
people to make small but meaningful changes such as one plant-based meal a day ensures that the shift is perceived as

achievable and worth trying. Efforts tailored to specific audiences' needs are also key. – There are some prevalent misconceptions around meat consumption being fundamental to masculinity and the Australian way: it is essential to challenge this.

- Social marketing is a key opportunity and increasingly important to help popularise evidence-based messaging in the face of media noise and efforts by vested interests to sow confusion and unscientific messaging. Micro-influencers, celebrities, chefs and athletes can help change social norms and 'speak to' diverse audiences.

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		Women & Youth

Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods

Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

Policy Data & Evidence Governance omen & Youth Trade-offs Empowerment Environment and Climate

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

• There was some divergence among participants about how ambitious the guidelines should be. Some felt that they should aim for consensus-building that doesn't imply radical changes. Others emphasised the urgency of dietary transitions and the need for stronger messaging given the short timeframes remaining to bring diets in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, climate commitments and agenda on noncommunicable disease. Overall, however, there was consensus that prioritising plants and reducing intake of animal-sourced and highly-processed products are essential messages, supported by abundant and conclusive evidence, that everyone can agree on.

• One of our 'implementation' groups highlighted the potential of plant-based meat alternatives (analogues) to reduce reliance on animal-sourced foods, with continual innovation and research pointing to significant health and environmental sustainability benefits. However, a participant from another group raised concerns that some of these products may still have a significant carbon footprint and lack a good nutrition profile. Work will be required to ensure transparency in this space to allow consumers to make informed choices. Despite some variance of views on this rapidly-evolving sector, there was unanimity that the scientific consensus supports dietary patterns that emphasise whole and minimally-processed plant foods.

• There was a degree of variance expressed regarding the evidence that should inform dietary guidelines. There was overall confidence in the existing evidence review process in Australia (a thorough and wide-ranging review that seeks to avoid industry influence), but a couple of participants raised the need for reform. In particular:

Current methods for assessing strength of evidence prioritise the contribution of randomised controlled trials, but it is impossible to conduct long-term trials with diet; nor are these suitable for assessing sustainability impacts. The strength of evidence rating methodology proposed by the True Health Initiative known as HEALM (Hierarchies of Evidence Applied to Lifestyle Medicine) was proposed as an important step in the right direction.
 There was also the suggestion that current approaches to evidence reflect a limited philosophy, and that the

- There was also the suggestion that current approaches to evidence reflect a limited philosophy, and that the interrelationships between dietary patterns, human nutrition and planetary health need to be reconceptualised, with evolutionary theory and ecology playing a much more central role. This echoed the introductory talks that highlighted the importance of new mental models that learn from Indigenous wisdom. Our second keynote speaker, Prof Boyd Swinburn, outlined the nascent Mana Kai policy in Aotearoa New Zealand that draws on Māori concepts around the social and environmental aspects of food, and how these are interrelated. The third keynote speaker, Dr Sandro Demaio, also pointed to Aboriginal Australians as being the original founders of the concept of planetary health.

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