

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Wednesday, 19 May 2021 09:00 GMT +12:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Action Track 3 - Nature Positive Production
CONVENED BY	Permanent Secretary-Ritesh Dass-Ministry of Agriculture
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/25341/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Member State
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Fiji

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

141

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

20

19-30

97

31-50

22

51-65

2

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

56 Male

85 Female

Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

24 Agriculture/crops

3 Fish and aquaculture

5 Livestock

5 Agro-forestry

Environment and ecology

1 Trade and commerce

7 Education

2 Communication

Food processing

1 Food retail, markets

10 Food industry

Financial Services

7 Health care

2 Nutrition

44 National or local government

Utilities

Industrial

26 Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

2 Small/medium enterprise/artisan

Large national business

Multi-national corporation

2 Small-scale farmer

Medium-scale farmer

6 Large-scale farmer

11 Local Non-Governmental Organization

3 International Non-Governmental Organization

15 Indigenous People

8 Science and academia

Workers and trade union

Member of Parliament

Local authority

34 Government and national institution

12 Regional economic community

23 United Nations

2 International financial institution

15 Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

6 Consumer group

3 Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

The Fiji National Dialogue was divided into five separate Action Track dialogues, each focusing on a specific Action Track. This report refers exclusively to Action Track 3 – Boost nature positive production. The Fiji National Dialogue for Action Track 3 was curated by the Fiji Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and led by the Fiji Convenor, the Permanent Secretary for Agriculture, Mr Ritesh Dass. Technical support for the curation of the dialogue was provided by the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP) offices in Suva, Fiji. Recognizing and observing the UNFSS Principles of Engagement, a series of highly consultative, inclusive, preparatory meetings were held in the lead-up to the dialogue with key government ministries and partners such as the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, the National Food and Nutrition Committee and Ministry of Agriculture as Convenor. The preparatory meetings developed the dialogue agenda, framed questions, and topics for discussion, developed a group reporting template to focus and guide group discussions and identified themes for discussion across three strands (i) Protect (ii) Manage (iii) Restore. The Action Track 3 dialogue was Chaired by the Fiji Ministry of Forestry, who also led the three main presentations. The prep meetings highlighted the Summit's Principles of Engagement and ensured that they were understood and incorporated into the format of the dialogue agenda and the identification of participants. In addition to this, participants were sent a URL to register online where they were required to read and agree to the Principles before being able to register. This ensured that everyone read and understood the Principles and committed to the SDGs before participating in the Dialogue. A group of 141 stakeholders participated in the Dialogue from diverse, multi stakeholder backgrounds consisting of government ministries, civil society, international and regional agencies (including UN agencies), academia and other key actors.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

As highlighted above, the Fiji national dialogue on Action Track 3 ensured that the UNFSS seven Principles of Engagement were observed throughout the dialogue curation process and its preparatory meetings. They were reflected in the development of the dialogue agenda and in the careful selection of participants from a diverse range of stakeholders. The need to (i) act with urgency, (ii) commit to the Summit and show (iii) respect for all views and individuals were highlighted throughout the dialogue preparatory process and were endorsed by stakeholders during the dialogue as well. The (iv) acknowledgement of complexity in our food systems was highlighted, particularly in the context of Fiji and the Pacific, where the food we eat not only brings together as families and communities – it also connects us back to the land and sea, where our food is traditionally sourced from. Transformation, therefore, would require a systemic multi-stakeholder approach, taking into account the fragility of our food systems and unique vulnerabilities to factors such as climate, environment, biodiversity and food safety challenges etc. (v) Embrace multi-stakeholder inclusivity (vi) Complement the work of others – This was reflected in the diverse group of 72 participants who were part of the multi-stakeholder national dialogue - from areas of science, business, policy, healthcare and academia, farmers, youth and women's organisations, consumer groups and environmental activists. The dialogue provided an opportunity to 'think outside the box' and share innovative thinking, connect stakeholders, and broaden partnerships. (vii) Build trust - The dialogues were curated and facilitated in a way to ensure a "safe space", promote trust and encourage mutual respect for ideas and discussion.

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

The Summit Principles of Engagement served as important guidance for Fiji in the curation of its dialogues across all five Action Tracks, including the National Dialogue. The Principles encouraged Fiji to think innovative, transformative and to draw on the wisdom of a diverse group of stakeholders and partners to explore solutions in our food systems, and to help advance progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In addition, the Principles were used to guide different stages of Fiji's dialogue preparatory process and assisted in the identification of participants and stakeholders to ensure inclusivity and diversity. The Principles also assisted in facilitating discussions to ensure that all views were heard and respected and that any divergent views arising at any stage of the process were taken into consideration, listened to with respect and recorded.

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

The Fiji national dialogue on Action Track 3 – Boost nature positive production was held on 19 May, 2021 at a crucial time as Fiji was well into its first month of COVID-19 pandemic with restrictive measures and lockdowns. This makes this Food Systems Summit even more crucial to Fiji as it enables the country to study the challenges exposed or exacerbated by the COVID crisis and to find transformative solutions to emerge and build back. Curation and Methodology – In compliance with the country's COVID-19 restrictions, the Fiji national dialogue was virtually curated on the Zoom platform, using a participatory method of wide, multi-sectoral stakeholder engagement. In addition, interaction and crowdsourcing platforms such as Slido, polls and the Zoom chat box were also used to crowdsource questions and engage participants in live polls and quizzes throughout the duration of the four-hour dialogue. 140 participants took part in the dialogue. They represented government ministries, development agencies, UN agencies, civil society, international institutions, Pacific regional agencies, women's groups, international NGOs and academia. Prior to the dialogue, participants received the following from the Secretariat: (i) Invitation to participate in the dialogue (ii) Dialogue Agenda (iii) Relevant resource materials (reading materials, video links etc) (iv) Reporting template identifying questions and topics for discussion groups Dialogue Format – Registration of participants (online in advance and on the day itself) – Official opening address by the Permanent Secretary for Environment – Setting the Scene What is the UN World Food Systems Summit 2021? (Video on the Summit by Dr Agnes Kalibata) – What is a Food System? (Examination of existing Fiji and Pacific food systems, including strengths and vulnerabilities) o Presentations on Action Track 3 □ Protect – Wildlife Conservation Society □ Manage – Ministry of Forestry □ Restore – Conservation International – Discussion groups on themes and questions focused on questions such as (i) Highlight areas for improvement in the delivery of services that are critical for nature positive production (ii) Are there barriers for this to happen? (iii) What are the transformations needed in Fiji's current Food System to boost nature positive production in Fiji? (iv) Are current efforts enough to achieve nature positive production? – Participation and Engagement – Through crowdsourcing using Slido questions, live polls, zoom chat, zoom breakout discussion groups, plenary reports/discussions, and presentations. Group reporting templates were also shared with participants to review following the dialogue to allow them the opportunity to include any information that may have been missed out by rapporteurs – Communications and media – The outcomes of the dialogue and key messages from the Fiji Permanent Secretary for Environment were highlighted in a Press Release issued to the media which received extensive coverage by local mainstream media and on social media platforms (Facebook and Twitter). UNFSS hashtags #UNFSS @foodsystems #SDGs and #foodsystems were used in all media content to ensure that messaging had a multiplier effect. Links to media coverage are included in the Attachments section at the end of this report.

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

1. Protect, Wildlife Conservation Society

The COVID-19 pandemic is contributing to an overlapping crisis in terms of biodiversity loss, climate change and unsustainable development, which is worsening and deepening due to the current health crisis. Government and financial institutions investments in the pandemic recovery are an opportunity to alleviate the global crisis by supporting and protecting natural systems, including our food systems. Nature-positive food production systems recognize that biodiversity underpins the delivery of all ecosystem services on which humanity depends on. Most food production hinges on the wise management of ecosystem services. Protected and healthy ecosystems are the best way to ensure productive agriculture and nutritious foods and biodiversity for Fiji.

The current biodiversity crisis is evidence of our unsustainable use of natural systems, with agriculture being responsible for 80% of global deforestation. Drivers linked to food production cause 50% of freshwater biodiversity loss. There are some tools to protect biodiversity such as protected areas, land-sea planning and management and nature-based solutions. Policy and legislation to protect species and natural habitats are also key. We need to understand how the Sustainable Development Goals relate to one another and how these goals relate to our country policy and at the lowest level to protect our food systems.

2. Manage, Ministry of Forestry

There needs to be a general appreciation for nature-based solutions, with lot of space for solutions harnessing economic potential especially in these uncertain times of the COVID-19 pandemic. Lot of this work is outdoor based, so it is safer in terms of workplace opportunities. There is a pressing need for urban forestry policy and governance as existing policy is fragmented with lots of underutilized land, especially communal spaces in urban areas. Nature-based solutions will lead to optimally utilized resources through the realization of economic potential in food forest nutrition. This can develop open green spaces through urban forestry implementation and provided beneficial outcomes when looking at it holistically. Food forests are complex systems that may have from 3-9 layers with tall trees that act as wind breakers, smaller trees such as nut and spice trees, shrubs and groundcovers. They have the potential to greatly contribute to the economy providing trees to people willing to buy and processing plants and other products to end users that are sold at retail outlets

3. Restore, Conservation International

The regenerative productive farming sector can provide benefits and services while creating rural employment and sustaining livelihoods. There needs to be a paradigm shift to address the trade off in land uses and encourages communication and exchange of ideas from all multi stakeholder groups. There needs to be a departure from sectoral and siloed views of landuse to build on complimentary functions within the whole landscape focussing on people centred activities moving away from Eco-centred goals of sectoral management. Sustainable land management involves of all stakeholders and bring about discussion for proper landuse planning and adoption of sustainable practises in the long-term commitment to integrated approaches for land management.

Landscape restoration applies ecological concepts and principles to optimise the interactions of plants, animals, and humans to the environment from the ridge top to the coast. By building synergies across landscapes we are conserving above and below ground biodiversity as well as cultural knowledge diversity. This approach incorporates endangered species, carbon sequestration, adaptation to climate change and improve food security, and can be passive as when creating nature reserves where nature looks after it or very active and labour intensive, integrating local knowledge and resources to manage an area.

For landscape restoration we need to have enabling conditions such as district level landuse plans, landowners to adopt nature-based solutions, enhance small holder and traditional farming systems, integrate best practises based on locally a

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

MAIN FINDINGS

1. Protect

Food systems play a huge part in the local ecosystems and would be beneficial for the environment for stakeholders in the food systems to investigate innovative ways of ensuring a safer and healthier environment. Natural ecosystems are amply recognised as part of the food systems in the rural areas but not so much in urban regions. For example, forests are important not only to produce forest products but also for productivity of agriculture, helps to avoid soil degradation, capture water, mangroves, all species...Community awareness needed for people to understand the importance of protecting the forest as unique space for biodiversity e.g. tree frogs, or plants, protection of watershed/water sources etc. and increase their knowledge and skills for managing sustainably land & forest (restoring degraded land areas, participating in agro-forestry systems etc.).

Research, collaboration, and stakeholder involvement including private sector, with an emphasis on data collection and analysis is key in order to understand a way forward to protect our environment. This also includes blue economy for livelihoods, capitalising related services and resources not only the income that it may provide. In this sense, an overarching policy framework needed with collaborations from all the ministries in terms of biodiversity and sustainable use of our natural resources, avoiding silos.

Some barriers identified to achieve nature-positive production in Fiji were related to need to review policies and legislation in protected areas; need to strengthen data generation and management within Government; financing of the ministries to carry out the work and implement, monitor and evaluate existing policies; poor coordination between Government agencies and departments; lack of awareness on the importance of the protection of species, impacts of farming on habitats, species etc. People on the ground needs to be informed and understand how to preserve ecosystem, use of pesticides, avoid sea pollution etc.

2. Manage

Combined systems with trees, animals and crops (agroforestry, agrosilvicultural, silvopastoral etc.) were identified in the discussion as essential when managing existing food production systems to benefit both nature and people. Other important aspects that need some improvements in the food system are soil conservation, a seed system and prioritizing efforts to include Nutrition as a priority in the Food Systems, with better access (transport, distribution etc.) to nature fresh foods prioritized for consumption versus commodities as flour, rice etc.

There is a range of food production systems and potential products that can be applied successfully to different contexts. The smallholder farmers as implementers need to be aware of their farming options and the benefits of protection of ecosystems and biodiversity. A model based on Food System Clusters placing more management responsibilities on the people and less on the government was discussed as a potential solution when there is natural a disaster with unexpected challenges towards Food Security and Nutrition.

3. Restore

Restoration is only achieved through inter connectedness with the other areas of Protection and Management. There are some ongoing initiatives that can be used, as the Grow Your Own Food Guide for community training on home gardens existing tools – promoted by the ministries of agriculture and health. This can be complemented by an accompanying app – the Mai Kana app that discusses planting and maintaining home gardens. There is a need to revert to traditional food systems, with crop species that are climate resilient and use of local organic fertilisers. Also important to improve skills for managing fisheries, mangroves – all part of the ecosystem

Some barriers identified were related to the empowerment of women and local communities, a more inclusive approach is needed with people able to formulate strategic choices and control resources and decisions. Eg. Women market vendors are left out of village and community discussions and decisions, they are not informed. Ownership is a key factor to ensuring that information is received, absorbed and then used appropriately. Financing and resources to address food system initiatives are still scarce. Pesticide regulations and policy to control the use of pesticides need to be updated.

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

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

Discussion within the three groups presented a number of common trends and issues, as described below.

Multi-sectoral collaboration

An important transformative solution is to strengthen our government capacity to work interactively and collaboratively with other agencies and partners to find better solutions and use best practices. Policies from different sectors on different topics related to the food system (food security, climate change, protection of oceans etc.) need to be aligned. Policy and governance are key to transformation.

Holistic approach

A Reef to Ridge approach seems relevant for Fiji, looking at agro-forestry systems and encouraging small holder farmers to farm in one particular area while protecting another. In order to protect our oceans, our seabeds we need to first protect what we are doing on land which eventually goes down to the rivers and seas, as for example fertilizers. Some ideas best practices from other countries with similar contexts can help to find ways to support both the nutritional content of food, which can reduce NCDs but can also protect and conserve the environment.

Home Gardening should be part and daily routine of our life. Farmers need to add value to their crops (examples Uto flour/banana chips/cassava flour) for self-consumption (producing their own food from available resources) and to improve their markets, for example through food deliveries from rural to urban areas (registering for Bula Market Fiji Programme).

Working with the different partners in the food system (food processors) is important to improve the quality of foods being produced, advertised, consumed by the public.

Education

Discussion has to go into the education system, integrating agriculture science and home economics from primary school level and prioritizing the young generations and involving the Ministry of Education. Strengthen training for the traditional leaders in the landowning units so that they become key advocates to the people on sustainable resource use and protection of our biodiversity. Empower the people with knowledge to strengthen ownership of our natural resources. We need educated farmers that are equipped with both traditional knowledge (traditional crop varieties and climate resilient crops) and the latest scientific technology that takes into account the ecosystem that they are farming in to produce their products.

Strategic Collaboration is needed for research and education/training getting together government, regional organizations, international research organizations, national and regional universities, NGOs, communities etc. and sharing resources and knowledge (Vocational Education and Farmer Field Schools (FFS) including the Fijian concept of 'solesolevaki' were mentioned as positive examples).

Technology

The development of digital platforms accessible to farmers/end-users to ensure a knowledge framework providing information and guidance for design, planning and implementation of their activities was suggested. Some technical aspects to be address with digital tools were related to the monitoring of the agriculture activity, a digital plant repository, the environmental assessment of rivers and other waterways, the control of invasive species (crops) and better connection to the market.

Block chain technology and digitalization can play a key role, and help to engage younger people in te food system. Some examples (drones for monitoring land use changes, devices measuring changes of ocean temperature etc.) were mentioned.

Inclusion

Gender inclusivity is important as well as finding better ways of making everyone being part of the solution and decision making. Likewise other minorities, and those less fortunate like the disabled need to be included. To facilitate this, government line ministries may involve municipal councils to get women involved. Information needs to be brought to their level, language, applicability of implementation etc.

Behavioral change

Food habits need to change. Reduce importation of goods to promote local healthier foods and develop local products. However, demand for processed food still remains high. Better informing and advising is needed.

ACTION TRACKS

<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

<input type="checkbox"/>	Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Policy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Innovation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Data & Evidence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Human rights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Governance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Women & Youth Empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trade-offs
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Environment and Climate

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

An area of divergence identified during discussions was related to trade-offs between private sector and commerce and health with regards to the marketing of unhealthy food with some participants more/less supportive of stronger regulation. Some aspects related to industry activity and its impact on ecosystems were also discussed. Governments are trying to reduce emissions, and communication need to be strengthened with the private sector on different topics, as consumption on energy. For example, the food industry should use processing techniques that reduce energy consumption. There are some trade-offs between the need to protect the current ecosystems within a landscape and produce from the agricultural working lands. Sustainable intensification of production that follows the principles of conservation agriculture (climate smart and environmentally friendly) should be prioritised. Finance in the right way can be a solution; others see financial actors as a threat, especially with industries that may be driven by a short-term agenda. Discussion should be inclusive, incorporating public and private sector, farmers, development partners, etc. Responsibility with regards to the Food Systems and the need to protect, restore and manage them should be a matter of survival NOT only as a reporting mechanism. Not only the government is responsible for this, but all the stakeholders may play an advocacy role.

ACTION TRACKS

<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Policy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Innovation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Data & Evidence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Human rights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Governance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Women & Youth Empowerment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trade-offs
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Environment and Climate

ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

RELEVANT LINKS

- **Food Systems Dialogue Spotlights Nature Positive Production**
<https://www.facebook.com/fiji.agriculture/photos/a.1485597698378096/2921986948072490/>