

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

<b>DIALOGUE DATE</b>	Wednesday, 7 July 2021 09:00 GMT +02:00
<b>DIALOGUE TITLE</b>	UNFSS Science Days Side Event: When science meets policy to boost food systems transformation
<b>CONVENED BY</b>	Nelea Motriuc, Policy and Liaison Specialist, FAO Liaison Office with the European Union and Belgium and Esther Penunia, Secretary General of the Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA)
<b>DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE</b>	<a href="https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/25543/">https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/25543/</a>
<b>DIALOGUE TYPE</b>	Independent
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS</b>	No borders

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

334

## PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

100

19-30

150

31-50

84

51-65

66-80

80+

## PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

150 Male

184 Female

Prefer not to say or Other

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

179 Agriculture/crops

50 Fish and aquaculture

10 Livestock

20 Agro-forestry

50 Environment and ecology

Trade and commerce

Education

Communication

10 Food processing

Food retail, markets

Food industry

2 Financial Services

Health care

10 Nutrition

3 National or local government

Utilities

Industrial

Other

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Small/medium enterprise/artisan

Large national business

Multi-national corporation

3 Small-scale farmer

Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

Local Non-Governmental Organization

International Non-Governmental Organization

Indigenous People

5 Science and academia

Workers and trade union

1 Member of Parliament

Local authority

2 Government and national institution

Regional economic community

100 United Nations

International financial institution

1 Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

Consumer group

222 Other

## 2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

The dialogue brought together keynote speakers and panelists from many areas relevant to the Dialogue theme, involved at various levels in the food system transformation process. This degree of multi-stakeholder inclusivity builds trust and respect for one another in the process to achieve positive change. It also contributes to creating dialogue and exploring different standpoints, perspectives and challenges related to the food systems transformation. The Dialogue included international organisations, governments, regional organisations, scientific and research institutions, private sector and farmer representatives who showed commitment towards the upcoming UNFSS. The participants stressed the need to act urgently while recognising the complexity of the sustainable transformation of food systems and calling for a systemic approach to attain desired results. The principle of complementarity was reflected on two levels: (1) European level, through the complementarity of work of different EU DGs on sustainable food systems embodied in the European Green Deal; (2) and International level, through the contributions from governments (i.e. Costa Rica, Slovenia), science and knowledge platforms (i.e. Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa, Research Institute of Agricultural Economics (AKI) from Hungary, farmers' organisations (i.e. Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA), Pan-African Farmers' Organization (PAFO), as well the private sector and finance institutions (i.e. AGREA, Rabobank).

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

The principle of urgency was underpinned in the Dialogue's solutions-driven spirit, enabling speakers to bring forward practical solutions and ideas for food systems transformation. For instance, the European Commission represented through its Directorates-General – DG for International Partnerships (INTPA), DG for Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI), DG for Research and Innovation (RTD), as well as the Joint Research Centre (JRC) brought up the European Green Deal and its pillar strategies, such as the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies as a solid and robust vision for food systems transformation acting within planetary boundaries. Commitment to the UNFSS was, for instance, reflected through the recently published EU Council Conclusions on the EU's priorities for the United Nations Food Systems Summit that highlighted the EU's crosscutting priorities, such as (1) Strengthening sustainability and resilience; (2) Promoting healthy diets through sustainable food systems; (3) Strengthening food safety and public health; (4) Contributing to the sustainability and resilience of food systems through trade; (5) New finance solutions and business models; (6) Improving scientific knowledge and ensuring a strong science-policy interface. The complexity of food systems was underlined through the interventions from representatives of the science, government and farmers' communities from Africa, Latin America and Asia who brought up context-related challenges linked to the regions, territories, local governance, cultural aspects, and others. The principle of multi-stakeholder engagement underpinned the whole Dialogue that brought together representatives from 86 countries from Africa, Latin America, Asia, and Central Europe. The speakers and participants represented the voice of science, policy, farmers, the private sector, youth, women, and regional organisations. Everyone in the Dialogue had the possibility to engage and share its vision, concerns, propose solutions.

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

Multi-stakeholder inclusivity is crucial for an engaging, interactive, successful, and productive dialogue. Consider including in the dialogue multinational corporations and food industries who currently run the food system and bear the responsibility for its current state of the art. Consider always discuss both, WHAT and HOW, as myriads of solutions for food systems transformation were proposed, but their implementation, including mythology and means, are still not very clear.

# 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**

# 4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

## MAJOR FOCUS

The FAO Brussels Dialogue that saw high-level speakers from various organizations delivering keynote addresses and involved in panel discussions had the following focus:

- The need to bring forward the importance of science for efficient policymaking in the food systems transformation process, highlighting the role of the UNFSS Scientific Groups and the Science Days that preceded the dialogue. Value and consideration of the expertise of the Joint Research Centre and other Directorates-Generals of the European Commission (INTPA, RTD, AGRI) for strengthening research, innovation, scientific evidence, and the uptake of science by policymakers within the EU, and its potential to contribute to the global scientific capacity-building and partnerships to sustainably transform food systems, as highlighted in the European Green Deal and its pillar strategies (Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies);
- The Dialogue focused on exploring the potential of the science-policy interface to achieving the objectives of action track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all and action track 3: Boost nature-positive production. In the first panel discussion on the science-policy interface and the action track 1 focused on how science-policy linkages can help fight hunger and ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all, highlighting the need for an international platform for food systems that would go beyond the UNFSS to ensure an effective food systems governance;
- The need for new tools, approaches, and practices that would drive food systems transformation while proposing alternative strategies to produce more with less, address structural issues, and support small-scale producers for sustainability was equally reiterated;
- The geographic focus on Africa and Asia enabled the audience to better understand the challenges of small-scale farmers, how existing policy frameworks, the role of the governments, the international community, and the private sector contribute to building systemic science capacity at national and regional levels. The session also stressed the need to enhance the support provided to agricultural farmers, producers, entrepreneurs, and small-holders, especially women and youths to sustainably transform agri-food systems;
- The second panel put the emphasis on how science-policy dialogue can help reconcile agricultural productivity with environmental sustainability to minimize trade-offs for the environment. How science, technology, and innovation would contribute to the conservation of biodiversity, translating to innovation that focuses on sustainability and productivity as mutually inclusive issues were highlighted. In addition, the approaches made by the EU to bridge the gap between research and farming practices, advance research and innovation in developing countries to sustainably transform food systems were of major interest;
- Furthermore, the prospective solutions of the private sector to ensure sufficient and healthy food for all while preserving biodiversity and ecosystems were highlighted while outlining that government/international support is needed to foster an enabling environment for private sector investments in agricultural research and innovation.

### 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

The Dialogue's speakers underlined the complexity and the multi-dimensional aspects of food systems transformation and called for urgency actions to make food systems more efficient, resilient, sustainable, and inclusive. The following findings and conclusions emerged out of the discussions:

- Science, Technologies and Innovation (STI) have a great potential for food production and climate change, yet they need to be adapted to the needs of small-scale producers, provide the combination of incentives to accelerate the adoption, investments in rural infrastructure and capacity building to bridge the inequality gap. Global scale scientific assessments need to be translated into actionable knowledge at national and local scale.
- Global coordination, partnership, and cooperation with the coalitions of actors ready to support the change, global events, and multilateralism are of paramount importance to build a common narrative and drive forward the transformative agenda.
- The question of how to operate the transformation underlined the importance of co-creation and joint design of knowledge;
- The EU High-Level Expert Group put in place by the European Commission is an important mechanism and one of the deliverables of the European Green Deal. The works of the Group will also contribute to the UNFSS.
- An efficient transformation of food systems implies policies to be based on high-quality and multi-disciplinary science, while an efficient evidence and policymaking need scientific excellence and good understanding of policy cycle combined with an ability to communicate scientific evidence in a clear and digestible way;
- There is a need to incorporate local-based solutions and local practices, consider interconnectivity between various actors and sectors in food chain.
- For an efficient food systems transformation, we need to address data gaps about food systems, new methodology to integrate all the data and enhanced metrics to assess the progress towards food systems transformation. These three areas of work should be complemented with performance-based governance and link between policies and citizens.
- Real-time data are key to take effective decisions and bring solutions, while technologies are helpful to identify best solutions for best policies. This needs to be complemented with an analysis of different trade-offs including social, environmental and economic.
- The JRC works across four work streams in its science approach: (1) Models, integrated agricultural commodity and policy modelling platform allows JRC to model the situations and test policies; (2) Observations (i.e. soil) to test scientific approach to the collection process; (3) Combination of two – agricultural yield forecasting programme which combines the real time satellite imagery with the agricultural production modelling to identify the hotspots of change; (4) Standards and benchmarks. JRC has a very strong digital dimension with geospatial data, satellite science sharing and co-creation. JRC has also knowledge centres operating as science hubs for various topics, such as global food and nutrition security;
- An efficient science-policy interface should take into account four different pre-conditions: investments, institutional arrangements, enabling environment and capacity-building, both institutional and know how.
- Small-scale farmers are facing numerous challenges ranging from lack of appropriate knowledge and know-how, access to markets, equipment, financing, insurance, lack of agronomic practices. There is a need of a holistic approach to address the fragmentation of farmers, while farmers should be at the centre of all policies and interventions. They need to be the co-creators of knowledge and co-makers of decisions concerning them.
- Cross-fertilization between the scientists and different actors through a multi-actor approach, including farmers, civil society, education, governance is needed;
- Focus should be on the needs of farmers and bottom up and local solutions, while investing in transparency and traceability of food chains;
- Mitigating climate change only will not be enough we need localized, regional scale adaptation strategies and science and technologies can help;
- To see is to believe: farmers need to be co-researchers, co-creators, as they can conduct experiments on farms and inform policy-making with practical solutions and evidence. Important to create connection between farmers and research institutions, farmers need to be part of the whole research cycle.
- Soil is the missing link in the food system transformation and we need a robust policy framework to create coherence and better manage soils. There is a need to set up globally a minimum set of standards for soil protection; important to learn and exchange views with other countries and regions.

### ACTION TRACKS

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

**Food systems governance:** We have food systems, but we need to address their dysfunctionalities. We should not reinvent the wheel, but rather take stock, fix, enhance and consolidate instruments, dialogue spaces, and mechanisms for an efficient food systems regulation and governance. The EU High-level expert group established for this purpose is ensuring this thorough analysis and will be advancing solutions and recommendations that can be considered in the UNFSS works.

**Co-creation/co-design:** Co-creation, partnership, and co-design approach considering all forms of knowledge such as scientific and experiential knowledge should be integrated together to produce better and sustainable results.

**Need to involve farmers and small-scale producers:** Farmers are the repositories of important evidence-based knowledge, as they have the possibility to test, experiment and try new technologies on farms. This evidence should be underpinned by cooperation with research institutions and governments in order to inform both, scientific and policy uptake. Farmers need to be part of the whole research and policy-making cycle. There should be incentives, capacity-building, enabling environment, governance, and infrastructure as pre-requisite elements for farmer's empowerment.

**Need for tangible data, methodologies and metrics:** Tangible commitment by the agricultural sector and all stakeholders for transformative and nature positive solutions should be driven by facts, scientific evidence and market demands. Data, technologies, innovations and complements (governance, human development) should underpin the process.

**Need to address interconnectivity:** A big challenge science will face, will be the implementation of jointed models since we no longer deal with individual issues but an interaction of numerous issues and challenges, such as environmental degradation, climate change, hunger and inequities. Coordinated collection and use of enormous data sets will be key in achieving the expected results from the use of joint models.

**Need to make soils and biodiversity central in the process:** Soil is the missing link in the food system transformation and we need a robust policy framework to create coherence and better manage soils. There is a need to set up globally a minimum set of standards for soil protection; important to learn and exchange views with other countries and regions.

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## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

No divergence recorded

### ACTION TRACKS

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# ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

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## RELEVANT LINKS

- **FAO Brussels Dialogue: When science meets policy to boost food systems transformation**  
<http://www.fao.org/brussels/news/detail/en/c/1417515/>
- **Dialogue recording**  
[https://fao.zoom.us/rec/play/R3vgkiXUwT-ZhdMXezl\\_7LVjpBreb7-NZFgye7mrC2Fww9WE9cCT0W79tTIdJ-PBm7XdbWUmrq28mJnT.IyVd40t\\_9zH7m9Lo?continueMode=true&\\_x\\_zm\\_rtaid=4\\_HipeQvRBKdlLguSeFK6A.1625657396606.ea862641324e4f58ad3e1bcb9d2e3d2e&\\_x\\_zm\\_rhtaid=710](https://fao.zoom.us/rec/play/R3vgkiXUwT-ZhdMXezl_7LVjpBreb7-NZFgye7mrC2Fww9WE9cCT0W79tTIdJ-PBm7XdbWUmrq28mJnT.IyVd40t_9zH7m9Lo?continueMode=true&_x_zm_rtaid=4_HipeQvRBKdlLguSeFK6A.1625657396606.ea862641324e4f58ad3e1bcb9d2e3d2e&_x_zm_rhtaid=710)