

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Friday, 28 May 2021 10:00 GMT -04:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Caribbean Regional Dialogue on Food Systems
CONVENED BY	Shaun Baugh, Programme Manager for Agricultural & Agro-Industrial Development, CARICOM Secretariat
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	<a href="https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/43872/">https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/43872/</a>
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago

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

350

## 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?

The Caribbean Regional Dialogue was built around the idea of adding value existing policy processes, including the work of CARICOM Member States and their "Strategy for Advancing the CARICOM Agri-Food Systems Agenda," among others. There were preliminary meetings to this effect and communications materials were sent out ahead of the Dialogue that highlighted the complexities and trade-offs associated with food systems transformation issues in the Region and that reinforced the multi-stakeholder nature of the event. The principles were also highlighted in the introductions to the thematic sections of the Dialogue. To the extent possible, the Regional Dialogue incorporated the experience of several previous national and independent dialogues.

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

As mentioned above, a key feature of the Regional Dialogue was to build on existing regional policy processes that call for the transformation of Caribbean food systems while at the same time calling attention to innovative ideas and approaches from participants, from a wide group of stakeholders, that can be adopted, replicated or expanded to support the transformation to a more sustainable path.

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

# 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 Regional Dialogue followed the standard method to some extent but did not use small breakout discussions. Several CARICOM Member States had organized their own national dialogues and some had not. Consequently, the Regional Dialogue was built around three thematic sessions, each with an introductory speaker, followed by open discussion. Participants included some who had experienced previous national or independent dialogues and others who were new to the process, representing their stakeholder group. Explicit attention in the organization of the event so that a great many voices were able to be heard.

# 4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

## MAJOR FOCUS

The themes of the FSS are very familiar to CARICOM Member States and the Region has recognized the need to transform its food systems and find innovative ways to achieve the SDGs through this transformation. As far back as the 2001, the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (RTC) called attention to the integrated nature of food system challenges and the need for the fundamental transformation of the agricultural sector towards market oriented, internationally competitive and environmentally sound production of agricultural products.

Similarly, the 2010 Common Agriculture Policy was explicit in recognizing that food and nutrition security is a multi-dimensional and multi-sector issue. It called for simultaneous, holistic and concerted action on a wide front, encompassing, production (agriculture, fisheries and forestry), food processing and distribution, health and nutrition, trade, infrastructure, social welfare, education and information and communication sectors.

Considerable advancement has taken place since then, in particular on building resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stresses in light of the impact of climate change. Ahead of the Dialogue, CARICOM Member States were working to finalize the "Strategy for Advancing the CARICOM Agri-Food Systems Agenda". The Strategy recognizes that "the Region continues to face a myriad of challenges in developing a competitive agri-food system that can contribute to the achievement of its food security and economic goals. Challenges include high trade costs, vulnerability to climate change, environmental and external economic shocks, weak infrastructure, lack of modern and creative financing mechanisms, outdated extension services, limited application of technology and uptake of research and development.

Consequently, the Regional Dialogue was organized around three thematic areas of particular importance to the food systems of the Caribbean: food security, climate resilience, and funding and financing. Each theme was introduced by a speaker who highlighted those elements that distinguish the Caribbean from other regions and offered propositions for change that are particularly important for the Region. Following this introduction, participants provided feedback on concrete experience that should be replicated or adapted and other proposals. A list of commentators was agreed ahead of time (in addition to anyone else who wished to comment) to ensure that all stakeholder groups would have the chance to speak.

Following the design of Summit around the five Action Tracks, the Regional Dialogue discussed topics related to Action Tracks 1-4 (Ensure Access to Safe and Nutritious Food For All, Shift to Healthy and Sustainable Consumption Patterns, Boost Nature-Positive Food Production at Scale, and Advance Equitable Livelihoods and Value Distribution) under the Food Security Theme. Action Track 5 (Build Resilience to Vulnerabilities, Shocks and Stresses) was discussed under the Climate Resilience thematic area, and cross-cutting issues relating to funding and financing issues under that Regional Dialogue thematic area.

### 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

While it is not possible to cover all points raised in the rich discussion, it is important to highlight some of the salient topics that have particular relevance for the Caribbean Region. These include:

1. the importance of market integration and reaching the target of lowering the Region's food import bill by 25 percent by 2025;
2. the recognition that most Members have limited land availability, ample marine resources and the need for greater productivity and income from green and blue economies;
3. the need for a societal shift to healthier diets through incentives, regulations and education; and
4. the urgency of making a strategic pivot in transforming food value chains to become more sustainable, increase value addition and move up the production chain for job creation and higher incomes.

All of these are underpinned by:

5. concerns about equity and special attention to the needs of the most vulnerable so that all have access to the resources needed for food security and healthy lives.

The input provided under the Regional Dialogue's Food Security Thematic Area dovetail very well with the first four Food System Summit Action Tracks. In addition to more general comments reflecting the need to accelerate progress towards meeting the targets of SDG 2 and other SDGs, the more regionally focused issues raised during the Dialogue can be grouped under five points of regional consensus mentioned above.

Furthermore, the Caribbean is particularly vulnerable to extreme weather events, with recurring tropical storms that cause enormous damage to Member States' economies. With the increasing threat of even more severe impact due to climate change, CARICOM Members are acutely aware of increasing climate-related threats and are committed to the transformation to a low-carbon development pathway.

Speakers at the Regional Dialogue highlighted how farmers and fishers in the Caribbean are struggling to overcome the impacts of the COVID-19 global health crisis, the related economic slowdown and unprecedented weather shocks. The Region must confront these risks, which threaten the development of crops, agricultural systems and food and nutrition security. There was a clear consensus that the Region must make its food systems climate resilient to ensure sustained supply of food to all its people.

In addition, CARICOM Member States recognize their obligation to safeguard the unique terrestrial and marine environments of the Region. This in turn leads to the urgency of enhancing biodiversity, including the revitalization of traditional crops, linked to the objective of healthy diets discussed above.

Finally, Caribbean Member States and regional organizations have long recognized the benefits of a transformed food system, including increased incomes and improved livelihoods, job creation and improvements in human and environmental health. Member States have also long advocated the need for fair and predictable access to financing to address the challenges and implement the necessary changes. Transforming the food system will require significantly greater public financing as well as private capital from national, regional and international partners.

Participants recognized that at the national level, the negative spiral of increasing indebtedness related, in many cases, to the periodic economic damage caused by hurricanes and other natural disasters that can reach as high as twice the level of annual GDP. At the individual or enterprise level there continue to be very low levels of financing available at acceptable terms for small producers, disadvantaged groups, youth and women, which reinforces inequities and limits the entry of new investors.

CARICOM Members acknowledged that unlocking greater investment in a more sustainable food system will require policy reform and public support to encourage investment in regional food production, including both agriculture and blue food, target healthy foods through incentives and regulation as well as the creation of new financing instruments that foster inclusive models of investment.

## 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
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	Human rights		Governance
✓	Women & Youth Empowerment	✓	Trade-offs
			Environment and Climate

## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/3

1. The key points under the objective of market integration and reaching the target of lowering the Region's food import bill by 25 percent by 2025 are as follows. There is a need to strengthen the food import substitution strategy, address transport and logistics issues across Caribbean states, remove non-tariff barriers for intra-regional trade and update trade legislation and regulations. Likewise, there is a need for increased systematic understanding and monitoring of national, regional and international market demand and increasing access to this information, including the implementation of an E-trade strategy for agriculture.

2. Under the heading of limited land availability, ample marine resources and the need for greater productivity and income from both, the following points were agreed. Greater investment is needed in technology development and innovation in fisheries, forestry and agriculture. This will include innovations in land and water management and the nexus with energy, the use of technology and emerging techniques to tackle issues of access to water (e.g., rainwater harvesting, aquaponics, hydroponics, climate smart greenhouses) and especially for small holder producers. Soil management improvement was highlighted by several speakers as was the opportunity to slash food loss and waste with multiple benefits for food security, the environment and incomes.

Capacity development for using these technologies is necessary, including through appropriate communication and training channels, on approaches such as Good Agriculture Practices (GAP), Good Food Practices (GFP) and Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA).

3. Under the heading of the need to shift to healthier diets through incentives, regulations and education, the Prime Minister of Barbados stated that not all food is safe food and too much of the food that the population consumes cannot be considered as healthy eating. It is imperative that the Region set clear standards and policies that discourage importation of cheaper and less-healthy food options and promote the national and regional production and consumption of foods that go into a healthy diet.

The Region will address obesity and constraints to reliable access to healthy diets by promoting home grown school feeding programmes to promote improved child nutrition. This is an example of needed incentives to buy locally and intra-regionally and to improve access to healthier foods grown locally, along with new educational and informational campaigns that promote healthy food consumption behaviours and practices. The actions will need to be matched with fiscal disincentives or other policies designed to reduce the production, importation and consumption of unhealthy foods.

4. With regard to the strategic pivot toward more sustainable blue and green food systems while increasing value addition, moving up the production chain for job creation and higher incomes, a number of policy and programmatic actions have been prioritised by the Region through the new Agri-Food Strategy. These include fostering cooperation and collaboration involving all actors across the value chain and partnership with external support agencies, along with much greater investment in R&D and technology innovation, and strengthening institutional and regulatory frameworks that support innovation.

It also requires efforts to promoting farming as a viable livelihood and income stream through the use of emerging techniques, identifying new markets and linked all this to a value chain approach. This will focus attention on new and emerging industries, including "blue foods", strengthen linkages across value chain stakeholders and encourage new entrants to invest in the sector.

### ACTION TRACKS

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✓	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 - 2/3

Practical suggestions to give force to Members' commitments that emerged from the Regional Food Systems Dialogue include the following.

Place greater emphasis on the expansion of climate smart agricultural practices and increase investment in research and development in these areas. This should include, among other things, greater use of climate data and supporting information as the basis for decision making in agriculture, along with modelling to improve understanding of the impact of climate change on priority crops and livestock.

Increase the contribution of the agriculture sector to Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to climate change commitments and utilize these to garner international funding support for food systems in the Caribbean.

Put in place policies and programmes that encourage reduction of food loss and waste, increasing producer incomes and simultaneously decreasing greenhouse gas emissions. This will also target increasing utilization of cold chain technology and clean energy along the food supply chain.

Develop financial instruments such as weather-related insurance schemes, like the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF), along with additional, layered approaches to disaster risk financing at the national level.

Further invest in comprehensive disaster risk management systems at the regional (CDEMA). Build on the extensive work done previously in Disaster Risk Management (DRM), including the development of the Regional Emergency Response Strategy and Action Plan for Agriculture, to strengthen the region's efforts in agriculture DRM.

Build on recent years' success in scaling up social protection mechanisms in response to climatic and economic shocks and further strengthen the shock-responsiveness and adaptability of social protection programmes.

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		✓	Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/3

With regard to the thematic discussion on financing suggestions that emerged from the Regional Food Systems Dialogue include:

- Committing a targeted allocation of public spending towards agri-investment.
- Expanding the experience of some Member States in promoting explicit linkages between investments in the more dynamic sectors of the economy, such as tourism, with those in the green and blue economies.
- Learning from the experiences of Brazil and its Sustainable Agricultural Finance Facility, and others, and adapt the lessons in setting up a similar financial facility in the Region.
- Implementing mechanisms that provide equitable access to financial resources for investment along the value chain for women, youth and under-served populations.
- Developing and implementing a Caribbean regional diaspora bond targeting investment in the food system.
- Providing fiscal incentives to promote greater investment in innovation in a more sustainable food system and healthy food.
- Encouraging greater private sector investment in sustainable food systems through blended finance or other de-risking mechanisms and support emerging technologies for small farmers (e.g. solar power, hydroponics, aquaponics, climate smart greenhouses, rainwater harvesting and storage) or that target small holder farmers/small-scale producer organizations.
- Promoting financial literacy among the public and educating the financial sector on opportunities within agriculture and food systems, in particular targeting job creation through the food system.
- Encouraging the development of a Climate Vulnerability Impact Investment Fund, a regional Financing Facility for SMEs and a global Food Loss and Waste Reduction Facility.

ACTION TRACKS

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KEYWORDS

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

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

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

# ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

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## ATTACHMENTS

- <https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/CARICOM-Member-States-Position-on-Transformation-of-Food-Systems-July-4-2021.docx>