

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Programme For Progressive Stages Of National Dialogues

The UN Secretary-General is calling on world leaders to take part in a Summit that will help to establish the future direction for food systems and accelerate collective action to that end. This reflects the increasing recognition that transforming food systems must be central in efforts to achieve all the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

The COVID-19 pandemic shows the fragilities and inequalities in food systems: it underscores the urgent needs to ensure that food systems are more sustainable, inclusive and resilient.

Multiple stakeholders are working together to contribute to tangible and positive changes in food systems. The preparatory process for the Summit includes several complementary workstreams that ensure dynamic exchanges among food systems practitioners involved in science, policy and implementation. Care is being taken to ensure that there are opportunities for the involvement of a broad range of diverse stakeholders in the preparation of the Summit. The Member State Food Systems Summit Dialogues are a critical element of the Summit preparatory process.

Food systems vary by location, and pathways to sustainability must be rooted in national and local realities. Each Member State of the UN has the opportunity to organize three stages of national Food Systems Summit Dialogues in advance of the Summit. These Dialogues enable stakeholders to work together - examining their food systems, exploring options for change, and shaping pathways for these systems to be sustainable by 2030. The Dialogues also offer opportunities for stakeholders

to firm up their intentions to work together in support of these pathways and to make specific commitments for the contributions that they will make.

During the Dialogues different stakeholders work together to devise pathways for the sustainable future of national food systems that make significant contributions to the SDGs. The Dialogues are designed in ways that enable participants to make connections, explore different perspectives on food systems, examine the possibilities that emerge, and turn those with the greatest promise into solutions that can be implemented when and where they are relevant. It is expected that they build on food systems work that is already underway within their settings.

The Member State Dialogues are organized by a national Convenor nominated by the Government. The Convenor is ideally located in a central high-level position under the direction of the Head of State or Government or a coordinating Minister. The Convenor will engage a broad range of stakeholders across government and other constituencies that compose food systems in the Dialogues programme. In countries with a United Nations system presence, United Nations Resident Coordinators and members of the United Nations Country Teams are available to assist with organizing and preparing the Dialogues.

These three stages of the Member State Dialogues take place between November 2020 and June 2021, in various sub-national settings as well as at the national level. In the standardized method, the three stages of the Dialogue process are as follows:



STAGE 1

Initiating national engagement in the 2021 Food Systems Summit

The purpose of the Stage 1 Dialogue is to initiate an inclusive process through which stakeholders involved in developing pathways to sustainable national food systems can be engaged in, and contribute to, the Food Systems Summit process. By the end of the first stage, relevant Member State stakeholders will be engaged, exploring the purposes and functioning of their national food systems and connecting with others within them. They will start to consider how they can contribute to, and benefit from, the 2021 Food Systems Summit. They will have examined their national food systems – their potential and vulnerabilities as well as opportunities for transformation. They will identify both emerging issues on which there is consensus and areas where major disagreements exist. They will commit to deepen their exploration of options by including a more diverse range of stakeholders in the next stage of the Dialogues, at sub-national as well as national levels. They will contribute to developing the material that is posted online in the report of this first stage of national Dialogues, summarizing outcomes and indicating areas for deeper exploration in Stage 2.



STAGE 2

Extensive explorations everywhere

The purpose of the second stage of the Member State Dialogues is to create an opportunity for engagement and interconnection among an even broader set of food systems stakeholders through multiple Dialogues that connect the sub-national and national level. National authorities may invite local administrations (such as provincial authorities and municipalities) to convene the sub-national Dialogues, which are foreseen to include many individual stakeholder groups (e.g. farmers, fishers, consumer associations, SMEs). These diverse stakeholders will explore options for sustainability in their local context, consider a wide variety of perspectives and identify options for collective action that can contribute to the national pathways towards sustainable food systems. To assist discussions, Stage 2 sub-national Dialogues will be informed by propositions from the Summit's independent Scientific Group and Action Tracks.

The Stage 2 sub-national Dialogues are followed by a national level Dialogue where participants receive news about approaches that emerged in the sub-national Dialogues that may have potential for more widespread application. Participants then consider how

EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF MEMBER STATE FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT DIALOGUES

Member State Dialogues will enable national governments to engage in the issues of constructing sustainable food systems in their totality.

1. The Dialogues will contribute directly to national engagement in the wider effort towards sustainable food systems in the coming decade; The expected outcomes of the Member State Food Systems Summit Dialogues include a **pathway towards sustainable national food systems** for the coming decade in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and opportunities to bring the pathway to life with practices, policies, actions, partnerships and commitments.
2. The Member State Dialogues will be an opportunity for exploring propositions from the different Summit workstreams (especially the independent Scientific Group and the Action Tracks) within the national context.
3. During the Dialogues, participants that represent different stakeholder groups will work out how they intend to contribute to the sustainability of national food systems and, ideally, make commitments for which they are accountable.
4. COVID-19 outbreaks are revealing multiple vulnerabilities and fragilities in food systems and the Dialogues present an opportunity to address them.
5. The Dialogues help ensure that the UN Food Systems Summit reflects national ambitions, and that national efforts benefit from the Summit preparatory process.
6. The Dialogues encourage diverse and inclusive communities of food systems stakeholders to connect with each other, explore experiences, agree on options for action and then combine their efforts in order to encourage the emergence of sustainable food systems.

these approaches might be encouraged within the context of the evolving national food systems transformation pathway.



STAGE 3

Consolidation, intention and commitment

The purpose of Stage 3 is to agree on the national pathways towards sustainable food systems by 2030, and to identify the intentions and commitments of different stakeholders. Stage 3 participants receive the consolidated outputs from the Stage 2 Dialogues, together with suggestions from the Scientific Group and Action Tracks. They will agree on issues where consensus exists and identify areas for further dialogue. They will shape the national pathway and seek to reach agreement on its scope. They will work out and prioritize the actions they expect to take in coming years to support the pathway and agree on intentions and commitments for future action. By the end of this stage, participants will have a greater understanding of, and commitment to, taking action in ways that will improve their national food systems. They will also have a more profound understanding of these systems and their potential. Feedback from the Stage 3 Dialogue will summarize key outcomes for the country and for the Food Systems Summit, and will be drawn upon for synthesis reports. It is hoped that the pathway will continue to be developed by and be of use to national stakeholders as they advance in their journey to food systems sustainability.

This work done in preparation for the 2021 Summit will be of crucial value as national efforts to adapt food systems, in line with the national pathway, are taken forward in-country during the coming decade. Due to the involvement of such diverse stakeholder groups in shaping the pathway, it is anticipated that action will be strongly supported by local, national, regional and international stakeholder groups. Stakeholder groups may, for example, choose to forge new partnerships or develop innovative forms of collaboration. It is hoped they will indicate their intention and commitment to do so at the time of the UN 2021 Food Systems Summit.



STAGE 4

After the Summit

Once the Summit has taken place, the Convenor organizes a fourth stage of the Member State Food Systems Summit Dialogues. This is an opportunity for the national authorities, leaders of stakeholder groups at national level, together with the Convenors and participants from the previous stages of national dialogue to reflect on the overall outcomes of the Food Systems Summit. It is hoped they will use this opportunity to re-examine the national pathway to sustainable food systems not only at a national event but also in the sub-national contexts of earlier Dialogues. During the Stage 4 Dialogues, participants will focus together on the contributions they are making, and intend to make, to the journey set out in the pathway. They will consider how they will maintain their engagement in the implementation of actions as set out in the pathway; reviewing progress and adapting the pathway as appropriate. This will be a good opportunity to communicate what has been achieved to date with the wider public, setting out processes through which progress can be monitored and accountability maintained. The in-country monitoring mechanism can be linked with any system set up during the Summit for reviewing actions taken in relation to commitments.

