



Report of the 1st Global Food Systems Summit Dialogue,
alongside the Sustainable Food Systems Programme Conference
1st December 2020

Global Dialogue convened by

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INTRODUCTION AND MAJOR FOCUS

This Dialogue was the first Global Food Systems Summit Dialogue. It was organized alongside the Sustainable Food Systems Programme Conference December 2020.

The UN One Planet Network's Sustainable Food Systems Programme (SFSP) is a multi-stakeholder partnership focused on catalyzing more sustainable food consumption and production patterns. SFSP Partners collaborate on joint initiatives, which range from normative, advocacy and policy support activities, to research and development projects as well as on-the-ground implementation activities that address our food systems challenges. The Programme promotes a holistic approach, taking into account the interconnections and trade-offs between all elements and actors in food systems.

This context of the SFSP conference provided a good opportunity to conduct an overview of some of the major challenges faced for making food systems sustainable and equitable.

Dialogue participants exchanged views about 9 discussion topics which explored the roles key stakeholders can play in making food systems sustainable: from those involved in producing, supplying foods and consuming foods – namely food producers, small and medium enterprises and consumers – to the public and private institutions which can create an environment conducive to sustainable production and consumption.

The 9 discussion topics were:

1. **Farmers and food producers** lead the way to sustainable and equitable food systems by participating in the formulation of policies that impact them; they are supported and celebrated.
2. **Small and medium enterprises** thrive as drivers of sustainable local food systems - innovating, creating employment, partnering and providing healthy foods to local consumers.
3. **Agrobiodiversity:** Agriculture and land use strategies protect and promote agro-biodiversity and stimulate local food production, providing sustainable livelihoods and healthy diets for all.
4. **Consumers** worldwide have shifted to more conscious and sustainable consumption patterns, within planetary boundaries, in line with nutritional recommendations.
5. **Science and Policy:** Policies, actions and investments in sustainable food systems are informed by science that promotes a systems approach, appreciates impacts beyond individual sectors, and builds on traditional knowledge.
6. **Governance/ Multi-stakeholder collaboration** - Innovative governance and incentives at all levels foster cross-sectoral collaboration across policy areas (e.g. biodiversity, climate change, health, trade, etc).
7. **Investments:** Responsible and accessible investments in sustainable and equitable food systems by financial institutions and private investors are the norm.
8. **Public Procurement:** Governments at all levels make maximum use of their leverage power to bring about sustainable food systems transformation through procurement.
9. **Policy coherence:** Interlinkages and trade-offs between policy areas (e.g. agriculture, environment, health, nutrition, etc.) are actively managed through holistic and coherent food systems policies that catalyze joint action.

OVERALL CONCLUSION

The discussions that took place in the Dialogue were animated and rich. Participants appreciated the fact they were interacting with individuals they had not met before, from institutions they sometimes did not know. This allowed for joint learning and taking on new perspectives, while also confirming the relevance of certain existing recommendations and initiatives. Some appreciated the possibility to put difficult questions on the table and address “elephants in the room”.

The connections in the groups generated a sense of enthusiasm and strengthened the urgency to act. Significant energy emerged as each group shared the highlights of their exchanges in plenary, one group even bringing to the fore the importance of bringing the power of love in decision-making, reminding all that food is also “feeling, culture and emotion”.

In terms of recommendation for action, the following themes emerged across the discussion groups, demonstrating the inter-relations between all the discussion topics:

Strengthening the agency of small and medium food producers and suppliers

Many of the groups emphasized the importance of strengthening the **agency** of those who are at the forefront of providing food – namely **food producers** and **small and medium enterprises** involved in food processing, retail and hospitality. The support needed includes: access to training (including on biodiversity and under-utilised crops, as well as processing and packaging) and higher level education; access to finance and insurance; market access, links to retailers and marketing strategies; reducing Food Loss and Waste (FLW) and sustainable intensification; capacity to work with data and use evidence-based approaches; and improved access to technology and digital tools. Family farmers, smallholders and SMEs are the backbone of many local economies. They are in “crisis” mode due to COVID, but investments in the post-COVID recovery provides an opportunity to support these key players, contributing to a “just transition”.

Empowering consumers to be drivers of change

To be key drivers in this just transition, consumers need to be empowered with better information such as through food labels and eco-labels which provide information about the environmental impact of food (water footprint, carbon footprint, biodiversity food print). We can build on the successful examples of campaigns to reduce Food Loss and Waste (FLW) but need to innovate and develop new tools for behaviour change, recognizing that food is “feeling, culture and emotion”.

Addressing economic and social inequities

Participants urged to address economic and social inequalities that poor producers and consumers face in the food system, reminding us that unless we do so “our solutions will only be band-aids”. A fundamental question remains how can we structure the economic system into a more circular and less extractive system? Participants called for more attention to power and agency in the Food Systems Summit agenda.

Investing in the “just transition”

The importance of aligning **public and private investments** to make the necessary changes possible was emphasized by several groups. Participants called for the use of tools to measure externalities (both positive and negative) to inform investments in a **just transition**, and to develop financial tools adapted to smallholders, “agro-preneurs”, and SMEs - for example that make smaller amounts of capital accessible locally. They emphasized the importance of investors and donors working in different sectors coming together to foster a food systems approach. Repurposing subsidies and tackling agricultural reform was also highlighted by several groups.

Public procurement was highlighted as a type of investment that can incentivize sustainable production and consumption, with several groups mentioning the potential of “sustainable school meals” which can link smallholders, organic agriculture, healthy diets and environment, as well as culture and education. “You can address all the SDGs through school meals”, one group mentioned. The question was raised as to why public procurement is not used more. Participants called for harmonizing definitions of sustainable public procurement and providing more guidance, including on reducing FLW. They also emphasized the need to legitimize the power of sub-national governments (in particular cities) which can have considerable leveraging power in local economies through procurement.

Local action supported by national leadership

Several groups recognized the struggle to reconcile global challenges and goals with the local reality and all emphasized the importance of building on action at the local level. Several highlighted the importance of subnational governments, in particular for revitalizing rural economies by investing in local employment and creating agricultural jobs. It is also at the local level that linkages between producers, retailers, consumers, researchers and cross-sectoral collaboration can be most effectively fostered. This said, the crucial role of strong national leadership (exemplified by China’s recent commitments to reach Net Zero carbon emissions by 2060) and coherent national policies was emphasized. Participants recommended that solutions incorporate global goals and strategies but staying anchored in local livelihoods and practical action.

Action guided by science and evidence

The importance of science, data and evidence to guide and monitor action – whether it be farming choices, SME’s marketing strategies, consumer information, innovation, investments, public policy, etc. – was highlighted by all groups. But participants called for improvements in the way science is conducted. Science should be done and communicated in ways that are more usable for policy makers; it should look at bridging fields and addressing trade-offs and lock-ins; and it should pay more attention to equity and inclusivity, contributing to a democratization of knowledge. The value of lived experience and traditional knowledge and the need to make it more visible was also acknowledged. Some advocated for the need to describe change in a way that connects to people’s emotions and incorporate emotion with data for decision-making.

Dialogue and bringing people together as fundamental

The importance of bringing stakeholders around the same table was part of all groups’ recommendations. Some spoke of linking consumers and producers, others industry and farmers. The example of value chain roundtables (such as in Canada) and food councils inspired many participants. One group coined the term “trickle-down dialogues” to get this conversation going beyond global/national levels to engage local changemakers. The importance of working with youth and bringing in under-represented groups was also emphasized. But some called for the need to move beyond dialogues and ensure there is a direct line to concrete action, by making small steps and holding each other accountable.

SDGs as the compass for measuring success, with a focus on the local level

Many groups referred to the SDGs when discussing how would we know whether we are successful. But they also emphasized the importance of focusing on the local level, both in terms of data collection and assessments of success – for example by working directly with farmers on indicators around climate change, biodiversity, and economic opportunities. Opportunities for refining indicators (e.g. to include investment-related components) were also mentioned.

All participants saw the Food Systems Summit and its preparation process as a unique opportunity to catalyze collective action, innovation and leadership in all the areas described above.

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

There were few divergences within and amongst the discussion groups, but participants highlighted several critical areas of divergence that involve difficult trade-offs:

- 1) The place of **animal source foods** in diets. Some highlighted how debates about meat eating becomes a “turf war” in food system conversations. One group recommended to focus on how these systems should be improved. Another highlighted the need to have a shared understanding of what a planetary-bounded healthy diet is and how we can achieve it with minimal levels of global trade-offs.
- 2) The question of **which investments should be discontinued**. The debate was on whether, and then how, means of agricultural support (including subsidies) should be reformed. Some participants were in favour of phasing out those that encourage damage – e.g. by leading to deforestation, waters, soils, fertilisers, desertification, etc. Some participants suggested that certain products that drive deforestation and Greenhouse gas emissions, for example, could be banned. But there are trade-offs, e.g. potential loss of employment in certain sectors and economic losses.
- 3) The tension between the **efficiency** of highly industrial food systems focused on a limited set of value chains (e.g. monoculture) **vs.** the multiple benefits (health, environmental...) of **diversification**.
- 4) **Conflicting policies**, and the reality that subsidies and investments might not reach the final-level target, such as farmers.
- 5) The **trade-offs** in terms of **what is most important**: Biodiversity, forests and climate, or food security, or healthy nutrition, or resilient livelihoods? Participants highlighted the need to work across sectors and identify promising opportunities – sometimes described as “sweet-spots”, “win-win’s” or “gamechangers” – that will contribute to equitable transitions.
- 6) The controversies in the **role of trade and markets**, including: the trade-offs between consumers’ access (buying price) and producers’ income (selling price); competition of cheap imports with local production vs. the need to ensure an efficient distribution of food; etc.
- 7) The **tensions between local and global levels**, with some feeling the current system blocks local action and calling for decision-making to move from the global to the local level.

No clear solutions for addressing these challenges were identified but there was consensus on the fact that controversies and “elephants in the room” must be surfaced if we want to really tackle these issues. Participants agreed that Dialogues and the Food Systems Summit provide a good opportunity to do so.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 : Description of participants

Total number of participants								95				
Number of participants in each age range	0-18		19-30	8	31-50	52	51-65	27	66-80	2	80+	
Number of participants by gender	Male	51	Female	44	Prefer not to say							
Number of participants in each sector												
Crops				10	Food retail				3			
Fish and aquaculture				1	Food industry				5			
Livestock					Financial services				1			
Agroforestry				1	Health care				1			
Environment and ecology				18	National or local government				7			
Trade and commerce					Utilities							
Education				5	Industrial				1			
Communication				5								
Food processing												
Others (please list):												
Accountability and benchmarking (2)					Food Systems (10)							
Sustainable agriculture– general (4)					Economics (1)							
Nutrition (4)					Urban food policy (1)							
Agriculture research (5)					Data (1)							
Foreign affairs 2					Think Tank (1)							
					Other (6)							
Number of participants from each stakeholder group												
Small/medium enterprise/artisan				2	Member of Parliament							
Large national business				3	Local authority				1			
Multinational corporation				3	Government and national institution				13			
Small-scale farmer					Regional Economic Community							
Medium-scale farmer					United Nations				6			
Large-scale farmer					International financial institution				5			
Local Non-Governmental Organization				5	Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance				8			
International NGO				28	Consumer Group				1			
Indigenous people												
Science and academia				11								
Workers and Trade Union												
Others (please list):												
Farmers Association (3)					Industry association (1)							
					Other (5)							
Number of participants from each region:												
Europe 51					Asia 10							
North America 19					Africa 6							
Latin America 15					Oceania 3							

Annex 2 : Respect of the Principles of Engagement in the Food Systems Summit

Respect for the [Principles of Engagement in the Food Systems Summit](#) are a fundamental element of the methodology of Food Systems Summit Dialogues.

How did you organize the Dialogue so that the Principles were incorporated, reinforced and enhanced?

The organizing team paid careful attention to inclusivity by striving to invite individuals from diverse stakeholder groups, sectors, gender, and countries. This entailed going through various iterations of the invitation list, each convening institution drawing on their respective networks.

Facilitators were selected with and briefed with care, to ensure they create a space for dialogue that is conducive to respect and trust.

The discussion topics were designed to complement the exchanges and work carried out under the Sustainable Food Systems Programme, and captured multiple aspects and perspectives of food systems so as to embrace their complexity. Discussion topics also aimed to focus attention on some of the most complex, or contentious issues.

How did your Dialogue reflect specific aspects of the Principles?

The Dialogue reflected the principles of **complexity**, **respect** and **trust** as planned for the design. Discussions in the groups were open and enriching for participants

The principle of **inclusivity** was not as strong as had been aimed for in the design phase, due to the fact not all those invited registered, and of those who registered, not all attended. The majority of participants were from North American and Europe and there were few youth. Despite this limitation, participants appreciated interacting with individuals and institutions they had never met or heard of before

All participants embraced the principle of “**acting with urgency**”, recognizing the importance of accelerating the pace of change in their recommendations and demonstrating commitment to act. All were **committed to contribute to the Food Systems Summit** preparation and follow-up, recognizing it is an important milestone to catalyse further action on food systems.

Do you have advice for other Dialogue Convenors about appreciating the Principles of Engagement?

It is important to pay utmost attention to the composition – namely diversity of the invitation list – and to plan for the fact that not all invited will attend. Furthermore, in the case of international online events, the “no-response”/“no-show” is likely to be higher amongst individuals who live in low income countries where access to and the reliability of internet may be more challenging. It can therefore be useful to invite more individuals from these regions to ensure they are well represented during the event itself

It is also very important to select and brief the facilitators carefully to ensure they are not pushing their own agenda but creating a space for all to express themselves and listen to each other

Finally, formulating the discussion topics so that they point to critical issues will help avoid rather superficial conclusions that stop at common areas of consensus.

Annex 3 : Outcomes per discussion group

Discussion Group 1 : Farmers and food producers

Farmers and food producers lead the way to sustainable and equitable food systems by participating in the formulation of policies that impact them; they are supported and celebrated.

The group identified the following action areas as essential to achieve impact:

- **Incentives:** in order to create transformative change, farmers need to have the ability to get out of that which is locking them in (policy arrangements, financing, standards, market pressures). New incentives need to be created to reward farmers for producing health and sustainable food.
- **Support Smallholders:** smallholder farmers and family farmers, in developing countries especially, must be supported in the areas of insurance policy and certification of their farm products.
- **Just transitions and farmer agency:** In any transition there will be winners and losers. Just transition policies need to be put in place so that farmers are not unduly harmed. As farmers will bear the costs, farmers need to be given much more voice and agency in the transition process. Creative strategies must be developed to align agriculture with investors' and food companies' net zero commitments.
- **Market access:** Farmers should be supported in connecting to markets, through digitization and other strategies.
- **Youth:** incentives should be developed to encourage youth to farm.
- **Improve livestock:** We need to focus on how to make companies involved in this sector move forward significantly in terms of climate impact, antibiotic use, etc.
- **Pre-competitive co-operation:** between companies to figure out how to lessen their impact and to find models to implement with farmers.
- **More dialogue between industry and farmers** is key to move sustainability goals forward and meet targets. The group raised the questions: how can industry help to deal with farmer locks ins and incentives? How can industry help to educate consumers and create links between farmers and consumers?

Divergence:

- **Livestock:** Debates about meat eating become a “turf war” in food system conversations. Perhaps it is more generative to focus on how these systems should be improved.

The group felt we could tell whether the actions listed above would be successful in the following ways:

- By working directly with farmers on indicators around climate change, biodiversity;
- If farmers continue to farm (rather than leaving the sector).
- If governments come together at the Food Systems Summit to make sure farmers are incentivized through the correct policies and commitments.
- If farmers are rewarded for enhancing ecosystem services (and other goals).
- If farmers have agency to get out of lock-downs they are facing.

The participants in the group were ready to contribute to this progress in the following ways:

- By developing a tool to evaluate how individual companies are contributing to food system transformation and create accountability for companies that are lagging behind.
- By having more difficult conversations, especially with regard to “elephants in the room.”

Discussion Group 2 – Small and Medium Enterprises

Small and medium enterprises thrive as drivers of sustainable local food systems - innovating, creating employment, partnering, and providing healthy and nutritious foods to local consumers

Recommended priority actions:

- **Bring companies into the nutrition space** - Healthy food should not come at a premium. Pricing needs to reflect externalities. Companies can play a role in including nutritional values of foods, from soil to plate. More local food chains and improved circularity are needed.
- **Address economic and social inequalities** - Need for more attention to power and agency in the Food Systems Summit agenda. Without addressing the economic and social inequalities that poor producers and consumers face, solutions will only be band-aids. More attention to legal and policy frameworks around investment, trade and market power, from the national to the global, to international level (e.g. WTO) is needed.
- **Leverage the COVID crisis to enable SMEs to build back better** – COVID will lead to more deaths from economic decline than the virus itself. The World Bank works looks at the barriers SMEs face, including finance, transport, policy etc. SMEs need better support to to feed their products into the supply chain and be at the core of building back better.
- **Provide tools to support behaviour change** - “You can’t change what you can’t measure”. Technology can support behaviour change. Common responses for why food companies aren’t accelerating sustainability practices is that consumers are not ready. Evocco wants to use data about consumers to compile market reports to provide to these food industry players.
- **Make data driven approaches more affordable for SMEs** - SMEs do not have budgets for data and often lack an evidence-based approach. An innovation budget to support SMEs is needed.
- **Financial tools** - Governments and large companies need to think about blended financial tools and subsidies. There has to be money on the table for SMEs to make necessary changes.

We will know if we are successful:

- **By identifying healthy food indicators** – e.g. ‘A food that is good for us and good for the planet’ – how can we engage people in the ‘power of love’. We want leading, positive reinforcement.
- **Through a focus on evidence and measurement** - Experience from the [Ceres2030 project](#), shows the importance of simultaneously reviewing the evidence and quantifying how much and where spending is needed. The Food Systems Summit should champion the call for better assessments of food systems problems and quantify the costs of solving them. Difficulty comes when moving from concrete measurements to less tangible ones (biodiversity etc.). New technologies need to be leveraged to support evidence building.

Areas of divergence:

- **Local v Global difference needs to be addressed.** Evidence and analysis are required to address trade-offs and enable change. Decision-making needs to move from the global to local level. The current system blocks local action. Use the ‘power of love’ – change needs to be described in a way that connects to people’s emotions. Incorporate emotion with data for decision making. Some ideas about what is least environmentally impactful are not correct.

Contributions participants can make:

- Share templates, tools and prototypes for strategies
- Come up with a unified tagline for sustainable and healthy food systems. It is difficult to align people behind a system, rather than an output
- Increase marketing budgets for SMEs to provide healthy and sustainable foods to consumers

- Continue to develop measurement and evidence
- Build tools to support consumer behaviour change
- Work with governments to get the policy right
- Carry out more R&D on health, healthy foods and behaviour change, to move sustainable food systems up governments' priorities list.

Discussion Group 3 – Agrobiodiversity

Agriculture and land use strategies drive the promotion of agro-biodiversity and stimulate local food production, in a way that provides sustainable livelihoods and healthy diets for all

The group found that we need “game changing action” to implement and support a global movement for more biodiverse crops from production to the consumer (including retail and gastronomy). Agrobiodiversity has huge relevance for producers and consumers and could be a game change to scale up nature-positive production and support people with healthy, nutritious and environmentally friendly food.

The group made the following recommendations:

- **The consumer** needs better information such as through food labels which provide information about the environmental impact of food (water footprint, carbon footprint, biodiversity food print). This is key as consumer markets are an important driver for change. The group discussed who provides information to consumers and agreed science should help to improve consumer information.
- **Producers** need to learn more about the use of “forgotten” seeds. Farmers need access to more trainings, better seeds (e.g. through improvement of seedbanks, seed quality, seed systems), and improved crop storage. Family farmers and small-holders need support in the following areas: farmer organization, improved market access and links with retailers; access to digital tools; access to higher education levels; capacities in processing and packaging to reduce post-harvest losses. Their ability to speak at policy level should be strengthened. Farmers also need support to do more with less (sustainable intensification). Policies need to address the challenges associated with water usage in agriculture.
- **Science:** Knowledge and information is key, not only for producers but also consumers, hence science has a critical role. More research on agrobiodiversity is required, together with better cooperation between science and multi-stakeholder innovation projects. Sound monitoring is needed to make actions successful, to trace crops from gene banks back to the ground, and to monitor diversity from production to consumption. Science needs to be transformed into applications, linked to farmers. The group shared the example of living labs, connecting researchers with various stakeholders (consumer organizations, farmer organizations, etc.), to co-create solutions and encourage local innovation processes.
- **Policy:** Subsidies need to be repurposed to support smallholders and family farmers in a transformation towards more (agro)biodiversity in the field, and to improve and increase the use of underutilized crops. Agrobiodiversity is being integrated in the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (reference to SDG 2.5 and Aichi target 13).
- **Private sector:** Resilient landscape approaches need to be strengthened, including with cooperation of private sector in landscapes, for example by supporting the production of more biodiverse crops. Business models that benefit agro-biodiversity are needed. For

example, in Costa Rica tourism is an important driver for agrobiodiversity through the Sustainable Gastronomy initiative, which is a huge opportunity for the tourism sector. There is space to test and pilot new innovations through collaborative business models.

The group also identified the following issues as key overarching topics for the Food System Summit in general:

- Better connections between science, policies and innovation
- Strengthening connections between farmers, consumers and all stakeholders in food systems to co-create solutions
- Bringing together different policy areas (climate change, Biodiversity, desertification). The agricultural sector could be at the center of this convergence through the food systems lens.
- Access to finance
- Knowledge sharing (esp. with farmers)
- How to structure the economic system into a more circular and less extractive system, and the need to shift incentives.

The linkages between culture, tourism and biodiversity

Discussion Group 4 – Consumers

Consumers worldwide have shifted to more conscious and sustainable consumption patterns, within planetary boundaries, in line with nutritional recommendations.

Recommended Actions:

- The continuation and spread of Food Loss and Waste (FLW) consumer campaigns in different countries, drawing on expertise such as the World Resource Institute's and examples in countries (UK & South Africa) where there are great success stories. A key component of this success also involves dialogues like these.
- Actions taken up by national leadership – these will have the greatest impact on consumer diet shifts, like that of China with their recent carbon neutral pledge, which will need to consider healthier consumption alongside environmental strategies.
- Redesigning inclusive solutions that change diets, beyond awareness building campaigns. Consumers don't change the way they eat because a panel of experts say so. Food is feeling, culture and emotion, so in the next three years we need to look past ideology, reconcile definitions and design inclusive solutions.
- The group saw an opportunity in the fact that social movements are "trending". Despite the effortless look and feel of citizens taking the streets, there is a lot of work and effort that goes into these, and we can potentially use this as a way to make change. Requires a closer look at highlighting the nexus of climate, food and people.

Controversies and Divergences:

- The debate on animal products in diets. There needs to be a shared understanding around what a planetary bounded healthy diet is, and how we can achieve it with the minimal level of global trade offs.
- We need to move beyond dialogues and ensure there is concrete action. We can manage this by making small steps in the right direction and holding each other accountable to what we say.

It will be possible to tell whether actions are successful in the following ways:

- Using standard templates for reporting and measuring success, such as in the case of FLW. Countries can measure baseline numbers around FLW and compare afterwards.

- For carbon pledges, there needs to be similar research, monitoring and evaluation to ensure that progress is taking place, using scientific methods. The key will be to look beyond national figures and dive deeper into the socio-economic, local and regional nuances that collectively make a systemic shift. This could also entail national food policies, that transcend an agricultural ministry, but involve budget and strategy across ministries.
- Ensuring an inclusive process for the redesign of the food system. This is happening now, with the Summit process underway, and the dialogues as a piece of that. However, for true success, we need to make sure new and diverse actors are feeding into the discussions, specifically from civil society and those who are struggling from the compounded challenge of a health pandemic, economic crisis and food insecurity. This includes SMEs, local retailers, and restaurants, as well as manufacturers, on the ground.
- Financial and behavioural nudges are important. Like all actions they must be applied differently in different contexts. The food environment is critical to people making the right demands.

Contributions participants can make:

- Advance the work of collective action groups that include retailers, manufacturers, and CEOs, and create standard messaging.
- Enhance and spread the word on science-based game changers. Support research that will build the evidence around consumer influence in shifting food systems.
- Continue to work with countries on ways to implement FLW Campaigns in a tailored approach that is fit for purpose.

Tackle reforms around agricultural subsidies that tend to negatively impact consumers on nutrition.

Discussion Group 5 – Science

Policies, actions, and investments in sustainable food systems are informed by science that promotes a systems approach, appreciates impacts beyond individual sectors, and builds on traditional knowledge

The group identified 3 areas requiring attention to ensure science informs the shift to sustainable food systems:

1. The science / policy interface:

- Bridging policy and science: Focus on translating science into something that is usable in policy making.
- Address gaps in existing regulations: address the lack of scientists involved in policy making
- Across fields: Bring different scientists from different fields together for coherent policies. More generalists are needed to bridge sectors.
- Science should help find adequate processes to address trade-offs. The existence of such trade-offs is established, but we need to go one step further and discuss how to facilitate dialogue between different sectors.
- Inclusivity: Key actors are often missing in discussions (e.g. technical hurdles excluding people). Science on the ground provides the opportunity to connect with stakeholders.
- Addressing asymmetries to ensure everybody has a voice in policy processes.

2. Issues around data:

- Data availability: efficient and inclusive ways to gather missing data need to be found (e.g data gap on “traditional markets” in the global south).
- Equity issues: we need to think about who is generating data, who holds it and who can access it (i.e paywalls). This means revising who is heard when collecting data and addressing existing power relations.

- Platforms to make alternative knowledge / lived experiences visible need to be created
- Validity of knowledge: make lived experiences and traditional knowledge count as valid knowledge in science.
- A platform should be created for different kinds of knowledge to come together and find a common ground.

3. Research and dissemination of knowledge:

- Overcome traditional scientific approaches: think about different ways to do science, such as with new tools and ways of sharing knowledge.
- Overcome the established notion of who is relevant in science, whom do we listen to, and bring in more young people and underrepresented voices.
- Access to knowledge should be democratized.
- Ask the question of relevance when doing research: whom are we working with, whom is it relevant for?
- Dealing with the difficulties of this era of disinformation: suggestion to not only focus on people who “believe in science” but to bring everybody in.
- Use interdisciplinary approaches to address and embrace the complexity of food systems and interrelated issues.
- Multidisciplinary/ transboundary research: need for a better toolbox for communication when engaging with diverse set of actors.
- Optimizing at local level: find innovation that is suitable for local contexts.
- Improve the contextualization of scientific findings.
- Communication work and knowledge sharing is needed, especially showcasing local knowledge
- Dissemination of results and funding: when asking for funding for research, communication and outreach after the study should be an integral part of the project.
- Finding ways to break lock-ins: for example, we can put our existing narratives aside and find new narratives that are co-created in a dialogue.

The group also discussed how science can be used in the Food Systems Summit Dialogues and recommended the following:

- Bring in new science and ways of knowing, not only already established knowledge.
- Bringing new people and underrepresented voices from the science community into the Food Systems Summit Dialogues (e.g young people, indigenous peoples, farmers)
- Connect data from different disciplines and sectors and make it available to foster dialogue among sectors
- Value different kinds of data and host “wisdom exchanges” to democratize knowledge production.
- Enable the art form of translating science and data into policy. What are new systems approaches and platforms that we can use to do this?

Discussion Group 6 – Multi-stakeholder collaboration

Innovative governance and incentives at all levels foster cross-sectoral collaboration across policy areas (e.g. biodiversity, climate change, health, trade, etc.).

The group identified the following action areas as priorities to foster cross-sectoral collaboration:

- **Working on sustainable school meals:** Every child goes to school in most of the world – school meals can be linked to smallholders, culture, organic agriculture, healthy environment. At the UNFSS, this can break silos. It is also politically easy because you can address all the SDGs through school meals. They can create links from local to national scales.

Who to involve? Governments, farmers, food suppliers, procurers, etc. National and local levels should work together.

What's the push to make this on a large scale? It's a triple win: through school meals you can achieve healthy food, healthy people, and healthy environment while addressing social aspects (small-holders livelihoods). It also helps build the resilience of cities and regions.

What stopped people to date and what can help? Sometimes the procurement legislation is not supportive, or farmers are in remote areas, are not well connected or are difficult to reach; it is also about political decision making, and the fact that this is not seen as a low hanging fruit.

- **Set up food or value chain roundtables/councils** where several parts of the food chain are represented and learn to know each other: Value chain roundtables have existed in Canada for almost 2 decades and proved very useful to respond to the COVID-19 food system crisis. These existing systems allowed a rapid response. Councils look at key value chains, and how we integrate the perspectives of actors to build resilience and plan for the long term.
- **Combining innovation with classical approaches:** We can use the many innovations in the corporate sector, technology, and social organization and make sure they are coherent with the UNFSS objectives. Yet, more classical approaches such as social protection programmes for example have been gaining success in the past months because they target and help to the most fragile people. Also, value chain actors have to sit together to solve these issues.
- **Having a coherent food policy and national round tables** that connect and inclusive value chains discussions.
- **Setting up departmental agencies to allow cross-sectoral collaboration:** example of Canada.
- **Programmes that address the triple burden of malnutrition** (overnutrition, undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies).
- **Foster open innovation:** facilitate sharing information which then allows innovation to come from broader set of actors, and support collaboration.
- **Multi-sectoral food policies:** food policies need to link agriculture, health, trade and environment across multiple parts of government. This is not easy and requires hard work and a matrix approach in organization.
- **Country-appropriate approaches:** the Goal for the summit is that countries explore all and actually set up these approaches as appropriate to their country.
- **"Embracing opposites"** in how we work across silos

The group determined that an **indicator of success** in fostering cross-sectoral collaboration will be the **permanency and institutionalization of these processes**. It proposed as a target that through the UNFSS, X number of countries should learn about these value chains roundtables and food policies.

Discussion Group 7 – Investments

Responsible investments in sustainable and equitable food systems by financial institutions and private investors is the norm

Recommended priority actions:

- Use tool and instruments to measure externalities (positive and negative).
- Better align private and public investments and look at linkages with social issues; tap into the potential of different types of economies and paradigms (e.g. circular economy.)
- Facilitate local access of smaller amounts of capital. As an entrepreneur, it is tough to work with a systemic approach, and therefore difficult to access investments.
- Support entrepreneurs, as change-makers, which can be considered "agropreneurs".

- Create joint actions between public and private sectors; identify the lock-ins and break them.
- Adopt a systems approach (which investors do not necessarily have). A cross-sectoral and cross-ministerial approach, at donor level, including issues on poverty, smallholder, livelihoods and climate change, would be a win-win situation.
- Look at long-term benefits, not just short-term - “longer-term patient capital”. For example, investments in building evidence which will bring multiple benefits.
- Look at smaller investments and longer-term impacts. These may need different Key Performance Indicators and other enabling conditions.
- Have better knowledge of enabling conditions. If we miss the political dimension, we miss an important aspect of the issue.
- On the nutrition angle, there is a need for guidance to create enabling conditions and capture best practices. One of the basic questions is “How to build more trust amongst stakeholders”?
- “Trickle down dialogues:” get this conversation beyond global/national levels to engage local changemakers.

We would know if we are successful:

- Through SDG indicators (for example SDG 2). Refine them and include investment-related components.
- If we are observing investments in transition (for example: shifts from conventional to organic). A collective transition would indicate a systemic transformation.
- There are already matrixes (e.g. the SDGs and other agreements), especially for investments purposes. However, some countries might not report on them.
- Enabling conditions need to be better understood, and related matrices should be developed. For instance, to understand that investment-related outcomes take time.

Divergence and contention:

- Which investments and perverse subsidies should be discontinued? Let’s get rid of the damaging ones in the next three years. Ex: Deforestation, subsidies, waters, soils, fertilisers, desertification, etc.
- Regarding trade-offs, there should be a process for just transition, to not leave farmers behind without any livelihoods. Investors/donors should invest in those schemes.
- Investments that hazard basic rights should not happen.

Major challenges include:

- Conflicting policies. Subsidies and investments might not reach the final-level target, such as farmers.
- The challenge of highly industrial food systems: diversification vs. mono-culture, for which the related value chains are highly efficient. This impacts other parts of the food system.
- Data and matrixes. Sustainability should be included in data, as well as in its access (easily and for free, for instance). Otherwise, we can be trapped into selecting only tempting data.
- More sustainable consumption, and (behavioural) change in consumption patterns. Ex: Digital technology for production and consumption of food, therefore aimed at farmers and consumers to give access to information.

Opportunities directly related to the Food Systems Summit (FSS):

- The findings from the FSS should be embedded in the goals of the major funding entities (including multilateral donors), with the support of countries.
- Allocation of funding (development and domestic funding) should be more directed to work on data. The FSS could be an accelerator for this.
- Leveraging platforms such as the [“Food Policy Platform for Change”](#) focused on agro-ecology.

One participant raised the idea of bringing food in the Global Commons Alliance (e.g. “Global Food Common”)

Discussion Group 8 – Public procurement

Governments at all levels make maximum use of their leverage power to bring about sustainable food systems transformation through procurement.

Issues, opportunities and action:

1. Procurement for **school meals**: has an immediate impact on sustainable production & consumption, ensuring short-term impact on dietary patterns and long-term impact on children’s health. Why is it not happening?
2. One third of food procured going to **waste**. There is an economic and environmental rationale for saving on food loss and waste (FLW).
3. There is a **disconnect between governments’ procuring teams and the source/destiny of the foods they procure**. Public procurement can send strong market signals and raise the whole market baseline towards healthier, more sustainable food and reduced FLW.
4. **Incentivize growers** towards more healthy foods. They won’t make the switch themselves as they lack resources. Living our values: governments have the ability to influence local/regional market development by their purchasing power. It is a long-term & high effort engagement.
5. The **bottom-up approach** with sub-national entities has grown (e.g. ICLEI) and can contribute to Nationally Determined Contributions. The stronger the local efforts, the more likely national governments will follow with strong commitment.
6. **Eco-labelling**. Procurement of eco-labelled products by government agencies can support a market for them. Increased resource efficiency will ensure that sustainably produced products are not more expensive.
7. **Definitions of sustainable public procurement** vary and can include health, waste, environment, human rights.
 - Create good procurement guidelines and improve technical competence in procurement teams.
 - Procurement managers need to have to be trained and incentivized to buy in to the idea of procuring food sustainably/locally, and factor that in next to cost minimization.
8. **Coherent policy, guiding structure and capacity building**. These should be tested in the real world; look beyond the cost; be technically supported by competent people and infrastructure, as well as transparent, cross-sectoral and inclusive.
9. **Just transitioning**: subnational governments can revitalize rural economies by investing in local employment and creating agricultural jobs through local public procurement policies.

Potential divergence and contention:

- Complexity of trade-offs: what is most important? Biodiversity, food security, healthy nutrition, forest protection or climate? Work across sectors, identify sweet-spots.
- Lock-ins & vested interests: Vested interested may not want to let go of the (unsustainable) status quo. Ensure that clear win-wins are used straight away, e.g. ensure procurement of locally grown school meals which support local economies –demonstrates the possibilities at local, municipal, sub-government levels.
- Current polices may incentivise deforestation. Certain products that e.g. drive deforestation, GHG emissions could be banned.

We would know if we are successful by:

- **Assessing the policy itself**, a key driver for the shift from a cost-based to a sustainability-focused approach with new KPIs.

- **A compelling economic case** for sustainable procurement, which can be built (and monitored) through:

- internalizing external costs
- measurable food waste reduction
- assessing proxies for success
- creation of a level playing field
- jobs creation and savings
- sustainability issue as a national security issue
- food safety as a public health issue
- measure of dietary quality and its impact on public health (also economic)

Contributions participants can make:

- Double down on leadership and use multi-stakeholder process to tackle the balance between economic development and preserving nature.
- Restate their commitment on FLW, look at other levers, collaborate with unexpected partners.
- Build on eco-label and resource efficiency.
- Demonstrate that different sectors and levels of government can collaborate on food systems and procure sustainable food.
- Continue promoting sustainable healthy diets to prevent the burden of malnutrition and work towards a healthy planet.

Discussion Group 9 – Policy coherence

Interlinkages and trade-offs between policy areas (e.g. agriculture, environment, health, nutrition, etc.) are actively managed through holistic and coherent food systems policies that catalyze joint action

We must start making changes within the food systems. Decisions today will show 10 years from now. The group identified the following priority actions:

- Break silos between different institutions, administrations and stakeholders. One first step is to involve in the conversation those stakeholders that have been left aside.
- The UN through the Food Systems Summit could provide guidelines and incentives to reorganize their administration so that transformation and policy coherence are achievable.
- A systemic approach requires radical changes within institutions and people's mindsets. Research must build on available information that can inform and transform policy and develop methods, processes and expertise to support institutional change. Research must go beyond writing scientific articles but also provide a frame for the change.
- We have evidence on what to do to make food production sustainable. Approaches such as agroecology are one of the key pathways. We need to use the evidence to implement necessary actions through holistic approaches. All stakeholders need to invest.
- Closing gaps between producers and consumers means knowledge and information democratization to facilitate informed decision-making.

Who must take the lead? A disruptive answer was new institutions co-created by existing institutions that are flexible and prospective enough to deal with today's and future challenges, learning from the past.

Participants identified the following areas of divergence:

8) Inclusiveness:

- One participant mentioned some NGOs and civil society feel somewhat relegated and concerned about private sector involvement in the FSS process. How can inclusiveness

be promoted, so that the interest of the people is properly represented, not only the private sector?

- Good mix between science and policy would benefit inclusiveness. Silos are not only between governments and departments, but also between stakeholders. All actors should be involved from the beginning not after it starts.

9) Role of trade and markets

- We need to localize food systems and deal with inequity, allowing people to produce what they need and not depend on cheaper food produced overseas. Shipping food is one of the problems in the food system. Global and local food systems are needed to feed the world. Policy makers should remove these blockages.
- Trade-off between consumers' access (price) and producers' income (price).

We would know if we are successful by:

- Setting milestones for monitoring the transformation. The SDGs are a good frame to do it, but need to be contextualized at national and subnational scales. There are different trade-offs at different levels.
- Promoting a systemic and holistic approach across scales.
- Challenges lie in collecting, analysing and accessing data for these indicators, to inform decision-making in different contexts and scales.
- In the short term, we should be monitoring policy shifts in countries to learn from them and act accordingly.
- Looking at the different interlinkages, associated trade-offs and synergies. We need in country level actions and try to break those silos.

Contributions participants can make:

- Help people, cities, regions and countries build up policy with systemic approach.
- Global research alliance for nutrition and Hopkins University are working to get information at subnational level on SDG indicators, to support local decision-making.
- The Millennium institute is working with UNDP to develop locally adapted models to see how SDG targets can be met based on local conditions.
- The Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica contributes with research and awareness raising of future professionals, and extension and discussion fora with other stakeholders, for example in the Food Loss and Waste Initiative in Latin America.

Annexe 4 – List of Participants

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