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LIMITE

AGRI 498
FAO 41
COAFR 387
COHAFA 84
CONUN 241
ENV 838
CLIMA 365
SUSTDEV 184
DEVGEN 195
RELEX 1045
SAN 496

NOTE

From:	Presidency
To:	Coordination Working Party (FAO)
Subject:	Draft Council Conclusions setting out the EU priorities for the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit

Delegations will find attached the draft text of the Council Conclusions setting out the EU priorities for the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit, as prepared by the Presidency on the basis of the oral and written input received from delegations over the past months.

Delegations are invited to ensure broad cross-sectoral coordination at national level on this draft text and to send their comments to the Council Secretariat (LIFE.FAO@consilium.europa.eu) by 22 January 2021.

Delegations are informed that, in addition to the FAO Coordination Working Party, a number of other Council Working Parties (in particular COAFR¹, CODEV², COHAFA³, CONUN⁴, WPIEI⁵ and the Working Parties on Fisheries, Forestry and Public Health) will also be invited to discuss the

¹ Africa Working Party.

² Working Party on Development Cooperation.

³ Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid.

⁴ United Nations Working Party.

⁵ Working Party on International Environmental Issues.

draft text (text proposals from the members of those Working Parties will have to be fed into the process through the members of the FAO Coordination Working Party).

**Draft Council conclusions on the EU priorities for
the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit**

I Background

1. The EU and its Member States (EUMS) recognise that food systems⁶ are a driving force that shapes our livelihoods, health, climate, environment and society. Some of the current global food systems are unsustainable. Addressing the shortcomings of food systems can contribute to meet major global challenges, including hunger and all forms of malnutrition, climate change, poverty and inequality, environmental degradation and biodiversity loss, natural resource degradation, the inclusion of young people, gender equality and women's empowerment.
2. The right to adequate food is the most often violated human right. More than 3 billion people worldwide are estimated not to be able to afford a healthy diet.⁷ An increasing number of countries worldwide are facing the growing burden of malnutrition in all its forms, with undernutrition coexisting with overweight, obesity and other diet-related non-communicable diseases. No country is on track to meet all ten of the 2025 global nutrition targets.⁸
3. The EUMS are deeply concerned about the current global challenges, including increasing global poverty and inequalities, hunger and malnutrition, armed conflicts, climate change, resource scarcity, environmental degradation and biodiversity loss. This calls for action on the part of all actors: private sector, governments, academia and civil society. There is a need to accelerate efforts to combat current global challenges by addressing the injustices in food and health systems. This calls for an inclusive approach and multilaterally agreed action.

⁶ Food Systems encompass the entire range of actors and their interlinked value-adding activities involved in the production, aggregation, processing, distribution, consumption and disposal of food products that originate from agriculture, forestry or fisheries, and parts of the broader economic, societal and natural environments in which they are embedded',
<http://www.fao.org/3/ca2079en/CA2079EN.pdf>

⁷ The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020:
<http://www.fao.org/3/ca9692en/online/ca9692en.html>

⁸ 2020 Global Nutrition Report: <https://globalnutritionreport.org/reports/2020-global-nutrition-report/>

4. While agriculture-based livelihoods are increasingly under stress from climate change, environmental degradation and population growth, current unsustainable agriculture – including crops, forestry, fisheries, livestock and aquaculture – and food production practices, along with unsustainable diets and food waste, are major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions, biodiversity loss, loss of natural pest control, and land and fresh-water use.
5. Biodiversity is rapidly declining globally. Biodiversity loss is a major concern for global food security and nutrition, as it can undermine the resilience of agricultural systems to threats such as pests, pathogens and climate change.⁹
6. Food systems are at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They affect all of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and are a crucial lever for progress across the 2030 Agenda. Food systems could provide healthy diets for an estimated population of about 10 billion people by 2050 without further harming the planet.¹⁰ This would require a combination of substantial changes in all components of food systems.
7. Against this background, the EUMS strongly support the UN Secretary-General's initiative to call for a Food Systems Summit (FSS) in 2021 in order to spur progress on all SDGs and welcome the inclusive and action-oriented nature of the FSS. The EUMS remain fully committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda and will continue to be close partners of the UN in promoting and strengthening rules-based international action.
8. The FSS can be a major opportunity to take stock of lessons learned and to give a strong and bold response to current food system challenges and their underlying causes at a global level. The COVID-19 pandemic and its economic and social fallout are only exacerbating a situation that desperately needs to be addressed.

⁹ Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services: <https://ipbes.net/global-assessment>

¹⁰ EAT-Lancet Commission Summary Report: <https://eatforum.org/eat-lancet-commission/eat-lancet-commission-summary-report/>

II EU principles on transforming food systems

9. The weaknesses and limits of current global food systems call for bold new actions, solutions and strategies. Science- and evidence-based actions and policy-making are of critical importance in this regard. To proceed in this way will require not only institutional arrangements to ensure a better science-policy interface and policy coordination, but also insights about synergies and trade-offs for policy coherence. Broad and inclusive access to the best scientific insights for governments, the private sector, civil society and consumers is a prerequisite for making well-informed decisions.
10. When developing methodologies for assessing food systems particular attention needs to be given to the externalities and hidden costs of food systems. In terms of assessing global food systems, concrete country case studies can help to understand the complexities and challenges that need to be taken into account for improved policies.
11. Food systems are multidimensional in nature and require open discussions on the synergies and trade-offs within and between economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainability. In order to have an action- and results-oriented process, a bottom-up and inclusive approach, including the involvement and strong commitment of all relevant actors and multi-stakeholder consultations, is required. Particular attention should be paid to the active participation of the private sector and its central role in shaping food systems and designing models of sustainable food production and consumption.
12. Both private and public investments are important bases for transforming unsustainable food systems and scaling up existing good practices. Emphasis should be given to applying international guidelines for responsible investments in agriculture and food systems.
13. We value the central role in the global governance of food security and nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and its High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE). The adopted and ongoing Voluntary Guidelines and Policy Recommendations developed by the CFS as well as the HLPE reports form an important body of guidance in moving towards more sustainable food systems.¹¹

¹¹ Here in particular: Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems for Nutrition (VGFSyN); Policy Recommendations on Agroecological and other Innovative Approaches (AaOIA); HLPE reports on 'Nutrition and food systems' (2017), 'Multistakeholder partnerships' (2018), 'Agroecological and other innovative approaches' (2019), 'Food security and nutrition: building a global narrative towards 2030' (2020) and 'Impacts of COVID-19 on food security and nutrition' (2020).

14. The EUMS welcome the FSS's holistic approach. This food systems approach should take into account the close links between food and agriculture (including crops, forestry, fisheries, livestock and aquaculture), climate change, environmental degradation and biodiversity, natural resource management, land tenure, private sector development, resilience building and crisis prevention, infrastructure and human health.
15. The EUMS therefore remain fully committed to aligning their activities in a manner consistent with the Paris Agreement, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

III Key priorities to be advanced through the Summit process

16. The FSS provides an opportunity to advance the EUMS sustainability agenda as enshrined in the European Green Deal, including the Farm to Fork Strategy¹² and the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030. The Common Agricultural Policy is an essential parameter for sustainable agriculture and nutrition. The EU's agenda to promote sustainable production, consumption and value chains could serve as a source of inspiration for the Summit to agree on global efforts. The process provides a valuable opportunity to learn from each other better within the international community.
17. In this context, we reaffirm the relevance of reducing hunger and all forms of malnutrition and addressing their root causes, such as poverty, inequality and conflicts, in an appropriate manner. We highlight the need to address food crises from an integrated humanitarian development and peace perspective. We are committed to strengthening the resilience of food systems that support vulnerable people and communities in fragile and conflict contexts.
18. We emphasise the need for further effective actions to halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses, by 2030, in line with SDG 12.3, to which the EUMS are committed.
19. We stress the importance of close cooperation at international and national levels, of collaboration between public, private and civil society actors and of raising consumer awareness.

¹² Council conclusions on the Farm to Fork Strategy:
<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/46419/st12099-en20.pdf>

We acknowledge that the shaping of EU policies has an impact on global food systems. The critical role of educated consumers, contributing to sustainable food systems through their behaviour and informed choices, should be emphasised.

20. We encourage the recognition of the key role of farmers and fishers, as food producers and custodians of natural resources, and their contribution to sustainable food systems. We highlight the importance of sustainable livelihoods and inclusive socio-economic development, including the creation of decent perspectives for food producers, in particular smallholders and family farmers and women's empowerment. Fair working conditions, decent incomes and adequate protection of workers within food supply chains, access to local, regional and global markets, land rights, access to knowledge, innovation and technology are key factors in ensuring better food security and nutrition, as well as the sustainability and resilience of food systems in the long run.
21. We stress the key role of open, fair and rules-based international trade, including through global food safety, sanitary and phytosanitary standards, in ensuring that all people can have access to adequate and safe food. Trade agreements can also be an important way to achieve ambitious commitments in key areas such as the implementation of the Paris Agreement, the conservation and protection of biodiversity, and sustainable food systems.
22. We consider animal health and welfare as well as plant health and the sustainable use of pesticides and antimicrobials to strengthen sustainable food systems to be of the utmost importance.
23. We therefore emphasise the importance of the implementation of the One Health approach, in particular in addressing the threat of zoonotic diseases and in combating antimicrobial resistance. The international cooperation practised by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), World Health Organisation (WHO) and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in this field should be strengthened and their recommendations implemented. Here, the sustainable use of antimicrobials is crucial, including the phasing out of antimicrobials as growth promoters.
24. The Summit should highlight the deep interconnection of food systems with climate change and biodiversity. We call for stronger global frameworks for the protection and sustainable management of natural resources in connection with food systems and in this context stress the importance of developing a sustainable and resilient post-2020 global biodiversity framework under CBD.

25. We underline the importance of the promotion of sustainable and competitive agriculture and fisheries, which conserves natural resources, respects animal health and welfare, preserves and where possible restores biodiversity, including genetic resources for food and agriculture, and contributes to the achievement of internationally agreed environmental, nature and climate protection objectives. Technologies such as digitisation and sustainable agricultural practices and approaches, including agroecological practices and organic farming, can all contribute to this aim. The carbon-storage potential of agriculture and forestry should also be highlighted in this context.
26. We encourage the recognition of the various initiatives already existing or currently under development at the multilateral level for sustainable and resilient food systems in the areas of human rights, development, food and agriculture, fisheries, health, environment and trade. The Summit should encourage national governments, international organisations and UN agencies, the private sector and civil society, to take up and implement adopted CFS Voluntary Guidelines and Policy Recommendations.
27. We are committed to advancing these priorities throughout the Summit process and in the long term, especially when working on the Action Tracks¹³ and Food Systems Summit Dialogues.¹⁴ Due to the strong interlinkages, we stress the need to avoid silos within the thematic discussions and to address the cross-cutting issues within a global approach.

IV Call for follow-up and long-term action

28. The EUMS are committed to reaching an ambitious outcome from the FSS, with a clear commitment and an actionable agenda to improve food systems in both the global north and global south, including innovations and enhanced investments. In order to be transformative, efficient, effective and accountable, the follow-up process and post-Summit work will be important. The EU is committed to taking an active role in shaping the post-Summit activities.

¹³ The Action Tracks are aligned with the Summit's five objectives: 1. Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all; 2. Shift to sustainable consumption patterns; 3. Boost nature-positive production at scale; 4. Advance equitable livelihoods; 5. Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress: <https://www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit/action-tracks>

¹⁴ The Dialogues offer a forum for stakeholders to come together to share their roles in food systems, consider their impacts on others and find new ways to support the SDGs: <https://www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit/food-systems-dialogues>

29. Firm commitment is needed from all relevant stakeholders and actors in the food systems, namely private sector, governments, civil society, academia, farmers as well as international bodies and organisations. The EU will use the Summit process to foster alliances and multi-stakeholder partnerships on transforming food systems.
30. We will promote strong UN cooperation in the FSS follow-up process and are convinced that the process will strengthen already existing and ongoing UN initiatives to deliver on the SDGs, while avoiding duplication or overlaps of workstreams. In particular, the Rome-based Agencies will be key to enhance the performance and sustainability of food systems. Moreover, collaboration with WHO, OIE, International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), UN Environment Program (UNEP), UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) as well as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank will be a key factor for a successful process.
31. We will continue to support the development of improved methodologies to assess the sustainability of food systems, including the consideration of their externalities and hidden costs to societies.
32. We also stress the need to develop data and improved methods for assessing the availability and affordability of sustainable and healthy diets. Results of such evidence- and science-based assessments should be considered a solid basis for policy decisions to develop and apply appropriate policy incentives aiming at more sustainable food systems. We are committed to intensifying research in this regard.
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