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Results of the United Nations Food Systems Summit

Executive Summary

The UN Food Systems Summit was convened by the UN Secretary-General on 23-24 September 2021. The discussion and the level of presence at the Summit elevated the political importance of the food systems at global level while providing a space for all the key actors and stakeholders to join their words and actions around this ambitious agenda. The UN Secretary-General's Statement of Actions with its five key areas as well as the result of the national dialogues including 103 submitted National Pathways for food systems transformation, are the basis for a smooth follow-up to the implementation of the Summit's results.

The Rome-based UN Agencies are tasked to lead the follow-up efforts, mobilizing the UN agencies and all key partners for provision of concrete and timely policy and technical assistance support to Members. A Coordination Hub building on the existing structure will be operational for the way forward, and for provision of technical and policy assistance support to the national transformation pathways.

Suggested action by the Council

The Council is invited to note the results of the UN Food Systems Summit as well as the follow-up actions that are under way towards a smooth transition.

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A. Results of the UN Food Systems Summit

1. The UN Food Systems Summit was convened by the UN Secretary-General on 23-24 September 2021. Through a virtual format the Summit offered a platform for mobilization of commitments by Heads of State and Government and other constituency leaders. It also served as a milestone after 18 months of process leveraging local, national, regional and global actors around an inclusive dialogue on food systems and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.
2. The Summit was guided by an Advisory Committee throughout the process with significant support provided by Members and various self-organizing constituency groups, as a result of which a number of outcomes were achieved. The process also created a UN system-wide follow-up process led by the Rome-based UN Agencies (RBAs) in close collaboration with the Summit Secretariat and the Office of the Deputy Secretary-General.
3. It has elevated the political discourse around food systems at global level bringing all actors and key stakeholders to the table, while promoting the topic through national led dialogues.
4. The Secretary-General's Statement of Action promised a better future through food systems, and indicated five key areas for making progress on the SDGs. The five areas, informed by the Summit's Independent Scientific Group, Action Tracks, Levers of Change, and the Summit Dialogues are: (1) Nourish All People; (2) Boost Nature-based Solutions; (3) Advance Equitable Livelihoods, Decent Work and Empowered Communities; (4) Build Resilience to Vulnerabilities, Shocks and Stresses; and (5) Support Means of Implementation. It also describes the approach to follow-up from the Summit.
5. A Food Systems Summit Compendium providing an overview of the engagement process and contributions was generated in the lead up to the Summit by all work streams (Action Tracks, Scientific Group, Levers of Change, National Dialogues) and is available online.
6. The Action Tracks and levers of change teams prepared policy briefs and more than 2 000 solutions, as well as more than 50 briefs by the Scientific Groups providing knowledge and evidence to inform the path towards the transformation of food systems to more sustainable, equitable and resilient food systems.
7. The national dialogues have great importance and contributed immensely to the outputs of the Summit. Around 148 Members led their national dialogues and 103 submitted National Pathways for food systems transformation by the time of the Summit. This information provided a basis for achieving the 2030 Agenda.
8. The Summit also brought forward commitments by Members and key stakeholders in support of transformative action for food systems nationally and internationally, as well as more specific initiatives related to nutrition and ending hunger.
9. Many calls for multi-stakeholder initiatives related to the five action areas were also made during the Pre-Summit in Rome and continued at the Summit, by Members joining together and aligning their interest behind specific objectives and pathways with focus on; zero hunger, healthy diets, universal school meals, food is never waste, agroecology, sustainable productivity, blue and aquatic foods, decent work and living income, and Agriculture Innovation Mission (AIM) for Climate, as well as others contributing to boosting nature-based solutions, building resilience, and unlocking finance, innovation, and other means of implementation.

B. Follow-up to the UN Food Systems Summit

10. The RBAs are tasked with taking a leadership role to take the follow-up process forward and ensure that the ambitious and urgent actions are successfully implemented and encapsulated in the five

Areas of Action. FAO will host a Coordination Hub, staffed by secondees from RBAs and other UN agencies. It will maintain a lean structure by directly leveraging existing teams and capacities in the UN system, as well as potentially leveraging key partnerships in the wider ecosystem of support.

11. The Deputy Secretary-General's office, with the secretariat and the RBAs are moving forward to ensure a smooth transition of capacity, structures and knowledge to the Coordination Hub. The Hub is expected to be initially in place at the beginning of 2022 with new organizational arrangements to be rolled out in a phased manner. A key role of the Hub will be to coordinate and facilitate the required technical and policy support from UN agencies and other institutions to assist countries in further developing and implementing their national pathways. This would include inter alia linking the multi-stakeholder initiatives that emerged from the Summit to the national transformation pathways implementation.

12. Provision of concrete and timely policy and technical assistance support to Members for implementation of national transformation pathways will be the main objective of the Coordination Hub building on the existing structure for achieving results on the ground.

13. The RBAs Principals and UNEP on behalf of the UN System, and the UN Development Coordination Office (DCO) will liaise closely with the Chairs of the RBA Governing Bodies, and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) Chair to lead the oversight of the implementation, monitoring the progress made on national pathways and reporting to the Secretary-General. The Hub will work through country and decentralized offices and will coordinate with Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams for a coherent and coordinated approach to countries. Access to a wide network of partners and stakeholders will allow for a coherent package for delivery and avoid the risk of falling into a siloed approach.

14. For the science ecosystem of support, the Hub will build on the work of the Scientific Group and a paper that is prepared in this regard for implementation, while working closely with the High-level Panel of Experts of the CFS and all other regional and national science groups. This approach will allow peer to peer learnings across countries and themes, and further engaging the countries in global processes. A key value added of the Hub will be the direct engagement and access to expertise and advice of youth, indigenous groups, women, and food producers and the private sector. This will be drawn on through a Stakeholder Advisory Group built around existing structures – for example the World Food Forum for youth and the Global Hub for Indigenous People food systems hosted at FAO.

15. This Coordination Hub will organize biennial stocktaking events to ensure reporting to Members, accountability for countries and constituencies for the commitments to change that have been made at the UN Food Systems Summit.

FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT COORDINATION, SUPPORT AND REPORTING

