

**Minutes**  
**Agri-Food Task Force on Sustainable Consumption and Production**  
**Fifth meeting**  
**11 and 12 September 2014**

**Summary report**

The Fifth Meeting of the FAO-UNEP Agri-food Task Force on Sustainable Consumption and Production was held on 11 and 12 September 2014 at FAO headquarters in Rome (a list of participants is given in Annex 1).

1. Purpose of the meeting

The main purpose of the meeting was to contribute to the development of a concept note for a new 10YFP Sustainable Food Systems Programme (SFSP), including possible work areas and start discussions on future governance.

In introduction Dr Arab Hoballah, Chief, Sustainable Consumption and Protection Branch, UNEP, insisted on the importance of this meeting for the finalization of the programme and briefly summarized the stages through which it has to pass before being submitted to the Board of the 10 YFP.

Alexandre Meybeck, on behalf of Mr Ren Wang, Assistant Director-General of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Protection, FAO, recalled some points of major importance for FAO. A programme on sustainable food systems has, as compared to other SCP programmes, to address very specific challenges: numerous issues to tackle, diversity of food systems; diversity in priorities; number of actors to reach, as well as the considerable number of ongoing initiatives and programmes often focused on some issues. This has important consequences for the programme: a need to not duplicate, and to focus on the interface of consumption and production, which is scarcely treated. There is also a need to be very inclusive and to find ways to engage the very numerous actors involved. This also drives the choice for outputs which can be of use to numerous actors: such as tools, guidelines, and discussions to build common understanding.

2. Recap on 2013-2014 Agri-Food Taskforce Work Programme

Ms Unati Spiers presented the main outcomes of the national roundtables in 2013–2014. Some participants noted that, especially in some regions, regional roundtables could be more appropriate. The need to take into account the specificities of SIDS was also noted. Participants remarked that these roundtables have to gather all stakeholders and that they are to be organized at national level. It could be difficult to find representatives of all categories of stakeholders at regional level.

Mr James Lomax presented the UNEP publication on Prevention and reduction of food and drink waste in businesses and households - Guidance for governments, local authorities, businesses and other organisations<sup>1</sup>, and called upon participants to express interest in pilot studies to test and further develop it. The outcomes of the Workshop on Knowledge and information for sustainable food systems had already been summarised in the final session and were not repeated here.

3. Process for the development of the 10YFP Sustainable Food Systems Programme (SFSP)

Patrick Mink presented the process for adoption of programmes under the 10YFP as well as their governance structure, including the roles of programme Co-leads, the Multi-stakeholder advisory committee (MAC) and MAC members.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.thinkeatsave.org/downloads/UNEP-FW-Guidance-content-VERSION-WEB.pdf>

#### 4. Relationship with other 10YFP programmes

Arab Hoballah presented the various programmes of the 10YFP with their stages of advancement as well as potential links with the SFSP.

#### 5. Feedback from the Public Online Survey

Mr James Lomax presented a survey that was undertaken by the 10YFP Secretariat targeting the identification of key issues and potential activities of the SFSP.

- 212 participants from 55 countries;
- Respondents covered the food system relatively evenly, with 14% focusing on primary production, 13% on consumption, 4% manufacturing, 4% retail, and 16% working “across the food system”; challenges identified, among which lack of interconnected policymaking, lack of tools for information and knowledge management and adequate incentives, lack of available data for sustainable food systems (SFS), research, ineffective subsidies, consumer behaviour, food waste.

Participants noted that many major stakeholders and governments had not participated in the survey and that it could only be considered as indicative. They expressed concerns that food safety has perhaps not been highlighted to the appropriate level in the survey and that consumption merits further attention.

#### 6. Discussion on the SFS Programme

Participants agreed to start the discussion from the document currently grounding the programme from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Task Force meeting in 2011 and, building upon lessons learned, to evolve new text into the format required for a 10YFP programme. They agreed that the vision has to be ambitious rather than realistic. There is a need to include a clear definition of sustainable food systems. The Task Force proposed to insert the HLPE definition on sustainable food systems<sup>2</sup>, including also, for ease of reference the HLPE definition of food systems<sup>3</sup>.

The participants noted the need for the goal to be very short. It was proposed to make it consistent with the way the SDGs are now being proposed. To add, somewhere in the note, “catalyse” would be good to show the way the programme will trigger broad change.

The scope of the work streams gave way to important discussions taking into account the fact that it is a 10 year programme. Therefore 3 points were agreed upon:

- The need for the work streams to cover the 3 dimensions of sustainability
- Avoid mentioning thematic areas of work to avoid duplication with existing initiatives and be more open to new priorities
- The need for the work streams to be broad enough to be open to all types of actors, and new actors.

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<sup>2</sup> HLPE, 2014, *Food Losses and Waste in the Context of Sustainable Food Systems*, Report of the HLPE, Rome: HLPE. “A sustainable food system (SFS) is a food system that ensures food security and nutrition for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental bases to generate food security and nutrition for future generations are not compromised”.

<sup>3</sup> HLPE, 2014, *Food Losses and Waste in the Context of Sustainable Food Systems*, Report of the HLPE, Rome: HLPE. “A sustainable food system (SFS) is a food system that ensures food security and nutrition for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental bases to generate food security and nutrition for future generations are not compromised”.

Several specific items were mentioned and discussed:

- The importance of capacity building
- Accessibility of information, noting that if there is too much information it reduces its accessibility. Therefore the need for information adapted to knowledge needs of actors, in other words, actionable.
- As part of it, identifying and sharing best practices
- The importance of fully integrating food chain approaches
- The great diversity of what could be intended by market based approaches, voluntary standards for instance, but also market based policies and mechanisms.

#### 7. Participation in the MAC

It is also important to encourage the participation of actors in the programme, including the MAC. Participants underlined the need for the MAC to adequately represent all stakeholders. The 10 YFP Secretariat will ensure that the criteria for membership are fulfilled.

#### 8. Way forward

The Task Force members are invited to provide additional inputs via email in 'track change' regarding the possible activities of the SFSP under its different workstreams, as the group did not finalize the discussions on possible activities (in particular possible activities of Workstreams 2 and 3). They are also invited to comment on the suggested objectives of the programme in Annex 2;

FAO and UNEP will then prepare a revised, shorter version of the concept note on the basis of what has been agreed during the meeting once all of the comments are received and circulate for public comment;

When the concept note is made available for public comment, there will be a call for expressions of interest in becoming a lead/co-lead of the programme, participating in the MAC and leading a workstream. More information will be made available nearer the time;

An open ended meeting could be organized in January to receive feedback from a broader range of stakeholders;

The concept note would need to be approved by the 10YFP Board about 1 month before the launch of the programme; and that

The SFSP is foreseen to be launched at Expo Milano (possibly around June 2015).

## Annex 1: List of participants

Attendee	Organization/Country	Email
Florence Agyei	Environmental Protection Agency, Ghana	<a href="mailto:fagyei@epaghana.org">fagyei@epaghana.org</a> <a href="mailto:fagyei@yahoo.co.uk">fagyei@yahoo.co.uk</a>
Herbert Aichinger	European Commission	<a href="mailto:Herbert.Aichinger@ec.europa.eu">Herbert.Aichinger@ec.europa.eu</a>
Roberto Azofeifa	Extension Head Office, Ministry Costa Rica, Costa Rica	<a href="mailto:razof@mag.go.cr">razof@mag.go.cr</a> or <a href="mailto:razofei@yahoo.es">razofei@yahoo.es</a>
Camelia Bucatariu	FAO	<a href="mailto:camelia.bucatariu@fao.org">camelia.bucatariu@fao.org</a>
Pamela Crespo	Switzerland	<a href="mailto:pamela.crespo@blw.admin.ch">pamela.crespo@blw.admin.ch</a>
Anna Crole-Rees	Switzerland	<a href="mailto:anna.crole-rees@crc4change.ch">anna.crole-rees@crc4change.ch</a>
Sandro Dernini	FAO	<a href="mailto:sandro.dernini@fao.org">sandro.dernini@fao.org</a>
Corrado Finardi	Colditetti/WFO	<a href="mailto:corrado.finardi@coldiretti.it">corrado.finardi@coldiretti.it</a>
Elise Golan	USDA	<a href="mailto:egolan@oce.usda.gov">egolan@oce.usda.gov</a>
Imke Haenen	Netherlands	<a href="mailto:imke.haenen@minienm.nl">imke.haenen@minienm.nl</a>
Arab Hoballah	UNEP	<a href="mailto:arab.hoballah@unep.org">arab.hoballah@unep.org</a>
Matthew Hooper	New Zealand	<a href="mailto:matthew.hooper@mfat.govt.nz">matthew.hooper@mfat.govt.nz</a>
Ketut Kariyasa	Indonesia	<a href="mailto:k_kariyasa@yahoo.com">k_kariyasa@yahoo.com</a>
Allison Loconto	FAO	<a href="mailto:allison.loconto@fao.org">allison.loconto@fao.org</a>
James Lomax	UNEP	<a href="mailto:james.lomax@unep.org">james.lomax@unep.org</a>
Emalene Marcus-Burnett	Barbados	<a href="mailto:Emarcus-burnett@foreign.gov.bb">Emarcus-burnett@foreign.gov.bb</a>
Savio Jose Barros de Mendonca	Embrapa, Brazil	<a href="mailto:savio.mendonca@embrapa.br">savio.mendonca@embrapa.br</a>
Alexandre Meybeck	FAO	<a href="mailto:alexandre.meybeck@fao.org">alexandre.meybeck@fao.org</a>
Mike Michener	Crop life	<a href="mailto:mike.michener@croplife.org">mike.michener@croplife.org</a>
Patrick Mink	Switzerland	<a href="mailto:patrick.mink@blw.admin.ch">patrick.mink@blw.admin.ch</a>
Clementine O'Connor	UNEP	<a href="mailto:clementine.oconnor.affiliate@unep.org">clementine.oconnor.affiliate@unep.org</a>
Nathalie Olsen	IUCN	<a href="mailto:nathalie.olsen@iucn.org">nathalie.olsen@iucn.org</a>
Suzanne Redfern	FAO	<a href="mailto:suzanne.redfern@fao.org">suzanne.redfern@fao.org</a>
Anne Roulin	Nestle	<a href="mailto:Anne.Roulin@nestle.com">Anne.Roulin@nestle.com</a>
Urs Schenker	Nestle	
Unati Speirs	South Africa	<a href="mailto:USpeirs@thedti.gov.za">USpeirs@thedti.gov.za</a>
Krishna Kumar Singh	Indian Council of Agricultural Research, DARE, India	<a href="mailto:kksingh@icar.org.in">kksingh@icar.org.in</a>
Rene Van Berkel	UNIDO	<a href="mailto:r.vanberkel@unido">r.vanberkel@unido</a>
Luisa Volpe	WFO	<a href="mailto:luisa.volpe@wfo-oma.org">luisa.volpe@wfo-oma.org</a>
Duncan Williamson	WWF	<a href="mailto:dwilliamson@wwf.org.uk">dwilliamson@wwf.org.uk</a>
Peter-Erik Ywema	SAI	<a href="mailto:peywema@saipatform.org">peywema@saipatform.org</a>