

EU Focal Point Opening Contribution
CFS open meeting on Voluntary Guidelines – Food Systems and Nutrition
14 April, from 14:00 to 15:30 - Zoom virtual meeting

I speak on behalf of the EU and its Member States.

- 1) Chair, at the outset, we would like to acknowledge your immense personal contribution to the advancement of this work and we extend our very best wishes to you for the future. Your leadership has been fundamental in bringing us to this point and we feel that your commitment has helped to build relationships within this working group that will see this product to completion.
- 2) In relation to the issue of **business continuity** for this VGFSyN we continue to have the firm ambition to endorse these Voluntary Guidelines at CFS 47. We feel that this work is an important contribution to the planned Food Systems Summit in September 2021 and therefore we would like to make every effort to keep both on track as much as possible. We would like the secretariat to make a proposal for options to achieve this considering also any possible change to the timing of CFS 47. We are watching developments in other fora to learn lessons as to what modalities are possible.

With regard to the text of this Final Draft:

- 3) In general, this Final Draft is a good basis for negotiations, and we acknowledge the work of the Chair and the secretariat in considering all the comments and suggested amendments to Draft One.
- 4) We feel that we must retain ambition for the language used in these Voluntary Guidelines in the context of global increases in hunger and malnutrition including obesity. We feel that **we should be targeting a significant 'step up change' improvement in food systems** to address this and to stay in line with the vision of the SDGs. We acknowledge that there are aspects of food systems that function very well, but overall, our food systems need to *transform* to address both health and sustainability. To this end, we hope that the final agreed language in the document can reflect this urgency and ambition.
- 5) We are supportive of the concept of '**sustainable healthy diets**'. We need to preserve the recognition that the food system and the individual diet have a direct impact on health and sustainability and that the two-way link between production and consumption is referenced clearly.
- 6) We value the section in the text on '**key concepts**' (**chapter 1.2**) and we feel this is core to adding value to this document. More specifically we feel that the terms 'Food Systems' and 'Sustainable Food Systems' should be retained as key concepts rather than their current position as footnotes 4 and 6. We feel that they deserve more prominence in the document.
- 7) We are considering the balance between encouraging healthy diets, discouraging unhealthy diets and taking account of the true cost to health, society and the environment when diets depart far from the optimum. We see that this final draft has touched on these issues and we will try to be constructive to collaborate with all representatives to get the right balance in these references.

- 8) In the context of the current COVID-19 crisis, these Voluntary Guidelines must be strengthened to include advice/awareness raising in relation to **pandemics** in general. We need a discussion on how a pandemic affects food systems and food security.
- 9) Finally, regarding the proposed change to **the title**, there seems to be a preference among EU MSs to keep 'and nutrition' as opposed to 'for nutrition' as this gives a slightly broader scope to the document. We also would also like to include the word 'sustainable'. Therefore, the title would read Voluntary Guidelines on (or maybe 'for') Sustainable Food Systems and Nutrition.