

## 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on Agriculture

### **Item 2.6: Operationalizing a food systems approach to accelerate delivery of the 2030 Agenda**

#### **Introductory notes**

More resilient, inclusive and sustainable food systems have been identified as a key entry point for accelerating progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda challenges countries to eliminate hunger and all other forms of malnutrition by ensuring that sufficient quantities of safe, nutritious and affordable food are available to all, but to achieve these objectives while also creating the growth and employment opportunities needed to eradicate poverty, sustaining biodiversity and the natural resource environment, and addressing the growing pressures of climate change. The outcomes of many contemporary food systems fall short of this aspiration.

Food systems stakeholders have long been making changes to improve the resilience and sustainability of food systems, but the many independent initiatives of governments, private sector and civil society have lacked a common framing of the complex choices that affect food systems, constraining the ability of societies to identify and implement pathways towards more sustainable food system.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted weaknesses in many food systems, it has also demonstrated the capacity of food systems actors to modify their behaviour and to take actions to strengthen food systems. Building on these actions could provide a basis for more significant, longer term and better coordinated actions to strengthen food systems and to ensure their role in delivering the 2030 Agenda.

This item introduces three discrete examples of mechanisms through which the Organization is seeking to ensure that a food systems approach can be more effectively operationalized. The examples illustrate how FAO is seeking to more systematically support Members in aligning food system actors' actions in support of more sustainable food systems through the provision of improved evidence, policy and regulatory guidance.

1. The 2021 UN Food Systems Summit provides a timely opportunity to forge interconnected actions and commitments and to create an improved and common understanding of the trade-offs that will be faced in the design of interventions that will guide the future development of food systems.
2. The updated Vision and Strategy for FAO's Work in Nutrition (ref COAG/2020/23) frames FAO's work to realize the Organization's full potential for promoting healthy diets and preventing all forms of malnutrition. It exemplifies a food system approach for better nutrition in accordance with the expertise and mandate of the Organization. It describes how FAO will work across the food system in order to raise levels of nutrition.
3. A Global Knowledge Hub on Indigenous Peoples' food systems, being launched by FAO with fourteen collaborating organizations, will bring together indigenous and non-indigenous experts, scientists and researchers to establish a knowledge based dialogue that will gather evidence based contributions on indigenous food systems. The Global Hub will inform policy discussions and research agendas on food security, biodiversity, resilience and climate change at local, national, regional and global level, ensuring that indigenous peoples' knowledge is preserved and protected.

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