



**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME  
FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR EUROPE**

**Thirty-third Session**

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**FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY ISSUES IN THE REGION**

Prepared by the European Union

**PROPOSAL BY THE MEMBER STATES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION FOR A DISCUSSION ON FOOD-BASED DIETARY GUIDELINES**

**Introduction**

1. Food is essential to our society in many ways. A comprehensive nutrition and health policy therefore requires a multifactorial and multi-disciplinary approach in which all those involved in producing, growing, processing, distributing, supplying and consuming food and communicating about the full composition of food are invested with a responsibility. This is crucial for preserving and promoting the physical and mental health of people of all ages. Eating should also be a source of satisfaction, thanks to the flavour and conviviality of meals. It is also more necessary than ever to focus on the sustainability of both the production and consumption of food, and on limiting the waste that stems from it, from the producer through to the consumer.

2. A multifactorial approach involving expertise from a wide range of fields is needed to achieve these objectives. Recommendations must be based on scientific research into the effects of excesses or deficiencies, interactions, production methods, toxicity, preservation, preparation, the social function of food, and so on.

**Food-Based Dietary Guidelines (FBDG), including sustainability considerations**

3. In the past, research into the effects of food on health has focused mainly on nutrients, and this knowledge has served as the basis for nutritional recommendations drawn up by committees of national and international experts. However, it is important to recognise that this information is difficult to use in everyday life and that there appears to be a need for recommendations based on foods and/or food profiles (Food-Based Dietary Guidelines - FBDG). According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, nutrient-based dietary guidelines can be perfectly transposed into FBDGs focusing on foods, portion sizes and eating behaviours, which can then be presented in text or graphic form (<http://www.fao.org/nutrition/education-nutritionnelle/food-dietary-guidelines/home/fr/>).

4. Using current scientific knowledge on the impact of food on human health, such (Food-Based Dietary Guidelines would aim to contribute to promoting healthy eating. They would not be aimed at patients or people who follow a specific diet for one reason or another, but rather at a healthy population, to get messages across about healthy and balanced eating.

5. In addition, the Coalition on Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems that was established in the context of the UN Food Systems Summit identified the development of FBDG incorporating sustainability as one of their first special projects that is supported by FAO, WHO, GAIN, UNEP and Consumers International<sup>1</sup>.

6. In June 2023, the Nordic Region adopted the Nordic Nutrition Recommendations 2023<sup>2</sup> that are integrating environmental considerations.

7. More recently, FAO, in the roadmap issued during COP28<sup>3</sup>, identified the development of food-based dietary guidelines (FBDG) including environmental considerations as the first action to pursue the objective of

<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.unnutrition.org/sites/default/files/2023-06/HDSFS%20Workplan%20Narrative%20-%20January%202023.docx.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.norden.org/en/publication/nordic-nutrition-recommendations-2023>

<sup>3</sup> [Achieving SDG 2 without breaching the 1.5 °C threshold: A global roadmap, Part 1 \(fao.org\)](#)

enabling healthy diets for all.

**Proposal for a discussion under agenda item 5.1 of CCEURO33**

8. In view of the above, CCEURO at its 33<sup>rd</sup> session, could address under agenda item 5.1 this topic based on the following approach:

- 1) Discussion on FBDG - some examples of countries that have developed FBDG.
- 2) Consideration of the interest of CCEURO in developing a guidance document to assist CCEURO members in drawing up FBDG, including sustainability considerations.