

## CFS POLICY CONVERGENCE PROCESSES

### NEGOTIATIONS' MODALITIES, FORMAT AND WORKING PROCEDURES

The CFS Secretariat, in consultation with the OEWG Chair, the CFS Chair, and the FAO Conference, Council and Protocol Affairs Division, identified the week of 21-25 September as a possible time to commence the first round of negotiations for the VGFSyN (to be confirmed by the Secretariat as soon as possible).

#### MODALITIES FOR NEGOTIATIONS

The process will build on the experience of previous CFS policy convergence processes and follow standard CFS Rules of Procedure. It will be facilitated by the OEWG Chair/Rapporteur with the support of the CFS Secretariat.

The proposed modalities for debate are as follows:

- a) In the interests of time and efficiency, the OEWG Chair/Rapporteur may place limits on the time available for interventions, and or indicate the number of interventions that will be heard before sharing a Chair's/Rapporteur's response or proposal;
- b) CFS stakeholders are asked to refrain from making lengthy opening or general statements. Inputs should be focused on substantive topics or issues where amendments are requested. Interventions should contain concrete text proposals, and concise clarifications of their rationale/meaning;
- c) Regional Groups and Participant constituencies are strongly invited to form collective positions, where possible;
- d) Proposals from Participants that do not find Member state support, will not be further considered;
- e) Based on interventions, a Chair's/Rapporteur's proposal will be formulated and projected on the screen, for which the Chair/Rapporteur will seek agreement;
- f) Absent agreement, the Chair/Rapporteur will call for one additional round of focused interventions, after which a new Chair's/Rapporteur's proposal will be formulated and presented;
- g) If no agreement is reached after this second round, the Chair/Rapporteur may request bilateral or small-group discussions, and if/when appropriate may call for a Friends of the Chair/Rapporteur discussion to resolve outstanding issues. Such discussions would be held either over lunch time or after the plenary session;
- h) There will be two sessions each day (9.30-12.30 and 14.30-17.30) and, if needed, the OEWG Chair/Rapporteur may decide to continue the session into the evening. The sessions will be interpreted in the six official FAO languages (English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, and Russian);
- i) All delegations are encouraged to be ready to reach consensus on the policy documents to be presented in plenary for final endorsement.

## FORMAT AND WORKING PROCEDURES

### I. REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

- a) Invitation letters will be sent from the CFS Secretariat to OEWG members requesting them to nominate their representatives during the negotiations by an established deadline;
- b) CFS Members, Participants and Observers will have to submit names, titles and email addresses of their representatives to the CFS Secretariat;
- c) The CFS Secretariat will finalize the list of participants and provide each of them with relevant information regarding proceedings and modalities for participation;
- d) Only registered participants and observers will be allowed to take part in negotiations, following confirmation from the CFS Secretariat.

### II. PHASED APPROACH

In light of the limitations due to the current pandemic and the outcomes of previous CFS Bureau and Advisory Group discussions, a “phased approach” regarding negotiations is proposed. This implies that the process will start with “virtual negotiations” as soon as feasible, continue with “hybrid negotiations” when permissible, and conclude with “in-person, physical negotiations”, when circumstances allow.

The details regarding each phase of the negotiations are outlined below:

#### VIRTUAL NEGOTIATIONS

- a) Zoom calls will be set for each session for all registered participants who will be given a password to access the sessions;
- b) Observers will be allowed to access the virtual sessions, pending registration, in line with paragraph 13 of the CFS Reform Document;
- c) Different channels will be made available for interpretation services;
- d) All participants in the virtual meeting will be visible to one another and will be able to turn their video and audio on and off. All participants are encouraged to remain in mute mode until given the floor to speak, and to keep their video on to ensure transparency and inclusiveness;
- e) All participants are requested to enter their name and indicate the name of the Member Nation or the Participant constituency;
- f) The text of the document under negotiation will be projected by the CFS Secretariat, when needed, through the “share the screen” option;
- g) Delegate of the same constituency are invited to coordinate to avoid that they intervene multiple times of the same matter;
- h) A request will be made in order for each Regional Group and Participant constituency to have a dedicated Zoom meeting room at their disposal for the entire session, accessible through a meeting ID and password;
- i) A quick guidance note on Zoom functionalities and features will be shared with registered participants;
- j) A dry-run will be held a few days before the beginning of negotiations to allow registered participants to gain familiarity with the features of the Zoom meeting and to test connectivity.

### HYBRID NEGOTIATIONS

- a) “Physical” negotiations would take place in one of the RBA Headquarters (Rome), as soon as physical meetings of non-staff guests is permitted, with a reduced number of participants representing the range of CFS stakeholders and constituencies;
- b) Each CFS Member and CFS Participant constituency would be asked to designate spokespersons who will participate in negotiations;
- c) Each CFS Member will be asked to nominate one delegate.
- d) The five CFS Participant categories established in the CFS Reform Document (paragraph 11) will be represented as follows:
  - i) UN bodies: FAO, WFP, IFAD, WHO, SCN, Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food and UNICEF (one delegate each);
  - ii) Civil society organizations: the Civil Society Mechanism, CSM (one delegate);
  - iii) Private sector and philanthropic foundations: Private Sector Mechanism (PSM) and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (one delegate each);
  - iv) International Agricultural Research System: CGIAR (one delegate);
  - v) International Financial Institutions: the World Bank (one delegate);
- e) While no silent observers will be allowed in the meeting room, sessions will be webcast in order for interested stakeholders to follow remotely;
- f) In this regard, CFS Members and CFS Participant Constituencies would establish their own internal coordination systems to ensure active communications during the negotiations between spokespersons and stakeholders following remotely;
- g) Virtual calls will be organized by the OEWG Chair/Rapporteur and the CFS Secretariat in advance of the negotiations to brief delegations on established rules and procedures, help them familiarize with the process, and respond to any questions.

This proposal foresees physical participation of a maximum number of people between 70 and 90.

### IN-PERSON, PHYSICAL NEGOTIATIONS

This option implies that the RBAs’ operational policies will allow proceeding with a “business as usual approach” in terms of negotiations taking place in-person with no limitations of access in the premises.

## **NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES ON FOOD SYSTEMS FOR NUTRITION**

The CFS Secretariat, in consultation with the OEWG Chair, the CFS Chair, and the FAO Conference, Council and Protocol Affairs Division, identified the week of 21-25 September for the first round of negotiations for the VGFSyN.

Considering the persistent limitations, the first round on 21-25 September will take place by virtual means, in line with the indications provided above, and with the intention to proceed through a phased approach toward physical negotiations for future rounds, if conditions allow.

**NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS ON AGROECOLOGICAL AND OTHER INNOVATIVE APPROACHES**

The CFS Secretariat, in consultation with the Rapporteur, the CFS Chair, and the FAO Conference, Council and Protocol Affairs Division, will identify suitable dates between October and early December 2020.