

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENT I

### Group of Friends of the CFS Chair– Implications of UNFSS on CFS

26 November 2021

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#### Our starting point

##### UN-SG's Statement of Action at UNFSS:

*“The CFS remains an essential intergovernmental and stakeholder platform for all working together to ensure food security and nutrition for all through sustainable and transformative food systems. Engagement with the CFS to provide leadership to the follow-up to the FSS will be essential to deliver on its mandate.”*

##### CFS-49 Plenary

The impacts and implications on the CFS of the UN Food Systems Summit has been subject of intense debates for the past months and was debated at length during the 49<sup>th</sup> plenary session, where diverse views on this issue persisted. The CFS membership decided the following:

*“18. The Committee took note of the potential implications of the UNFSS on the CFS and its HLPE, and looks forward to further analysis and consideration of next steps within the Bureau, in consultation with all Members, the Advisory Group, and other participants.”*

The CFS Bureau, in its meeting of 29 October, discussed how this mandate from the Plenary should be carried forward by the Bureau.

The CFS Chair summarised the discussion highlighting some of the key elements of the debate. While there is no specific mandate to the CFS derived from the Summit –as that mandate can only be agreed by the CFS Members in the appropriate fora-, the reference by the UN Secretary General to the CFS as *“an essential intergovernmental and stakeholder platform”* provides an opportunity for CFS to fulfil its mandate in a more effective and responsive way, in view of the momentum created by the UNFSS at the global and national levels, and among different constituencies.

The reference to the essential *“engagement with the CFS to provide leadership”* from the UN-SG's Statement of Action also encourages the CFS to reflect on how this leadership can be provided in the post-UNFSS context, in full respect and adherence to its vision and to the CFS reform document. It is of paramount importance to ensure full synergy with the RBAs' Coordination Hub, avoiding competition and overlaps, and observing the different roles that the agencies and programs play, vis-à-vis the CFS.

There seems to be scope within the 2009 reform document to work towards improving the impact of the CFS at global, regional and national levels, in support of countries' national efforts, working more closely with the RBAs. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that CFS is even more relevant than ever.

### **Methodology: Steps and timeframe**

The Informal **Friends of the Chair group**, open to all CFS Members and members of the 'ad hoc' Advisory Group, has been formed to support the Chair on the preparation of a Chair's paper - including concrete actions and options - to be presented to the Bureau in early 2022, as a basis for a wider consultation with all Members, the (ad hoc) Advisory Group, and other participants, as per mandate of the Plenary.

- The Friends of the Chair (FOC) group is asked to **consider a number of open questions** to help **identify key options and potential actions** for follow-up.
- These questions are grouped around **topics of relevance to both the UN Food Systems Summit, the 2009 CFS Reform Document**, and other relevant reference documents.
- Ideally, each question will be **addressed by sub-groups of participants**, each to be led by a Member's representative as a **facilitator**.
- The **facilitators will provide the Chair an analysis and a menu of concrete options** for moving ahead on each of the key questions, which will serve as a substantive input to the Chair to prepare a **Chair's paper that will be presented to the Bureau in January 2022**.

Criteria to be considered for emerging "next steps" and options:

- The FOC group is not a negotiating space. Members are encouraged to bear in mind that, at this stage and in this format, we are not defending our national positions but rather helping to converge in the near future.
- This is a brainstorming and open exercise that aims at generating a menu of possible next steps and options, not to agree on them at this point. Creativity is encouraged.
- Bear in mind, when proposing possible "next steps" or options, the following "check-list":

*Does the "next step" or option, which I am proposing:*

- i) ... respond to the CFS vision, reform's spirit and document, and improves the CFS' effectiveness and impact?*
- ii) ... relate to the Summit's contributions and is it relevant to those?*
- iii) ... ensure that inclusivity of all the membership is not put at risk, taken into account existing capacities?*
- iv) Can the "next step" or option - which I am proposing - be taken forward with existing resources, or will it be likely to secure those?*

## Timeline:

November/December> Facilitators gather written inputs from the FOC group members, that shall focus on providing *further analysis* on the relationship between the FSS and the CFS, as well as *consideration of next steps* in the form of proposed possible actionable options.

January> The CFS Chair compiles the inputs provided by the facilitators and prepares a Chair's paper to be presented to the Bureau and (ad hoc) Advisory Group for discussion and kick-off of broader consultations with the Members and participants.

February> Consultative process.

March> Following wide consultations, the CFS Chair will put forward a draft of "Proposed Options" for the consideration, and eventual decision, by the Bureau.

## Open Guiding Questions

- 1. How can we increase the impact of CFS policy products? How can the CFS membership better disseminate and make use of the existing and future policy products in a way that they better inspire our governments' policies and strategies, and empower all stakeholders, including as key reference frameworks for the FSS National Pathways and Coalitions?**

UN Deputy SG's Closing Statement at UNFSS:

*"The CFS remains an essential platform to bring us together to ensure food security and nutrition. Engagement with the CFS to provide leadership to the follow up will be essential to deliver on its mandate, but also to share the immense knowledge and tools that they have for us."*

CFS 2009 Reform Document (from para 5)

*"(ii) Policy convergence. Promote greater policy convergence and coordination, including through the development of international strategies and voluntary guidelines..."*

- 2. How can CFS better support countries' efforts to articulate and implement national food security, food systems and nutrition strategies, including the emerging National Pathways?**

UN Deputy SG's Closing Statement at UNFSS:

*"The CFS remains an essential platform to bring us together to ensure food security and nutrition. Engagement with the CFS to provide leadership to the follow up will be essential to deliver on its mandate, but also to share the immense knowledge and tools that they have for us. [...]"*

*All participants were able to benefit from the engagement and products of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) that steers global policy making. [...]"*

UN-SG's Statement of Action at UNFSS:

*"Inspiring visions for transformative food systems were forged when governments gathered businesses, communities and civil society to chart pathways for the future of food systems that respect the human rights of all people through National Dialogues across 148 countries. These*

*Dialogues revealed key building blocks for action by governments, together with different stakeholders, to further strengthen food systems by 2030 and support people to realize their right to food. [...] We must support national mechanisms that develop and implement national pathways to 2030 that are inclusive and consistent with countries' climate commitments, building upon the national food systems dialogues. [...] Follow-up to the Summit will build on existing efforts of countries and supporting organizations. Implementation of Summit outcomes to support these efforts at country level will use existing institutions, improving their responsiveness where necessary."*

CFS 2009 Reform Document (from para 3 and 23)

*"3. In order to realize this goal and ensure better coordination, CFS Members agreed on three key guiding principles for the reform – inclusiveness, strong linkages to the field to ensure the process is based on the reality on the ground and flexibility in implementation... [...] "...In Phase II, CFS will gradually take on additional roles such as: i) [...] Serve as a platform to promote greater coordination and alignment of actions in the field, encourage more efficient use of resources and identify resource gaps."*

*"23. It is crucial that the work of the CFS is based on the reality on the ground."*

- 3. How can the CFS provide its platform to multi-stakeholder alliances, coalitions and initiatives to share progress, connect with each other, in a strategic way (including those that emerged from the FSS and already existing ones)? How shall the CFS consider the five action areas (plenary, special events, side events...)?**

UN-SG's Statement of Action at UNFSS:

*"Throughout, we welcome emerging multi-stakeholder initiatives and coalitions to help accelerate progress towards SDG achievement informed by these five action areas..."*

CFS 2009 Reform Document (from para 5)

*"The roles of the CFS will be: i) Coordination at global level. Provide a platform for discussion and coordination to strengthen collaborative action among governments, regional organizations, international organizations and agencies, NGOs, CSOs, food producers' organizations, private sector organizations, philanthropic organizations, and other relevant stakeholders, in a manner that is in alignment with each country's specific context and needs."*

- 4. How can the CFS global science-policy interface represented by the HLPE be strengthened and well connected to other science-policy interface UN mechanisms, in view of the proposals in this area that emerged in the context of the FSS?**

UN-SG's Statement of Action at UNFSS:

*"Global initiatives to reinforce the ambition of science-based solutions will be key to deliver on the 2030 Agenda." [...] Collaborating with the High-level Panel of Experts (HLPE) of the CFS at global level, support strengthening the science- policy capacities and interfacing at local and national levels."*

CFS 2009 Reform Document (from para 26)

*"Participants in this expert process will utilize and synthesize available research/analyses and add value to the work performed already by numerous agencies, organizations, and academic institutions, among others."*

**5. What is possible to strengthen accountability within and among all stake-holders?**

UN-SG's Chair Summary and Statement of Action at UNFSS:

*“The pandemic has demonstrated renewed impetus for strengthened accountability across all constituencies to ensure the wellbeing of all people and our planet. Government ensures the enabling policy environment that holds to account all stakeholders, including business. Globally, existing institutions will need to strengthen their mechanisms to support mutual accountability among all actors. Leadership by the CFS and its mechanisms, including the Civil Society Mechanism, will be key to informing accountability for all stakeholders, including the private sector. [...]”*

CFS 2009 Reform Document (from para 6)

*“ii) Promote accountability and share best practices at all levels [...] Comments by all CFS stakeholders will have to be taken into account and new mechanisms will build on existing structures.”*