



## “Implications of the UNFSS on the CFS and its HLPE-FSN”

### OPTIONS PAPER

#### **DRAFT INCORPORATING COMMENTS RECEIVED AS OF 1 JUNE 2022**

#### **Background**

As a result of the Conclusions agreed by CFS 49 Plenary<sup>1</sup>, the CFS Chairperson convened an inclusive “[Friends of the Chair](#)” Group to further analyze the implications of the UNFSS on the Committee and its HLPE-FSN, and to explore options to maximize the synergies between the CFS and the UNFSS. As a result, several sessions were held between October 2021 and June 2022 with a wide participation of CFS Members and participants. At the session held on 5 April 2022, an “Options Paper” presented by the CFS Chairperson was discussed, and written feedback was provided by several CFS Members and participants.

This document presents an updated “Options Paper”, revised to reflect the inputs received, for further discussion and deliberation by the CFS Bureau and Advisory Group. As such, the “Options Paper” does not intend to agree on a concrete way forward nor to prescribe actions, but rather it intends to develop a “menu of options” from which the CFS Plenary, Bureau and Chairpersons may draw to increase and optimize the CFS-UNFSS synergies in the future, based already on the experience since the 2021 UNFSS.

#### **1. ON THE OVERVIEW OF POST-UNFSS PROGRESS**

The CFS should continue serving as a global platform to bring all FSN stakeholders together, providing its intergovernmental and inclusive space to **support the efforts towards food systems transformation to achieve SDG2**.

1. CFS may **regularly deliberate on one or several components of the UNFSS**, based on the **UNFSS progress reports to be prepared/issued by the UNSG**, under possible different options:
  - a. Within the annual CFS Plenary agenda;
  - b. Through a dedicated Special event within the regular plenary week;
  - c. Through CFS plenary week side events;
  - d. At a specific intersessional event.

Through this discussion, the UNFSS Coordination Hub could also present activities in support of Members and of food systems transformation, in relation to CFS Policy Outcomes.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fao.org/3/nh319en/nh319en.pdf#page=5>



2. The CFS may serve as the platform for co-hosting, with the UNFSS Coordination Hub, “follow-up exercises” in alternate years to the UNFSS “Stocktaking Moments” (the first of which celebrated in July 2023).
3. The CFS and the UNFSS may decide CFS to **play no role in the overview of progress**, except that which is already envisaged of the CFS Chair as part of the briefing structure (besides the RBA governing bodies and its Chairs) and the engagement of the CFS Chair and stakeholders in the UNFSS process, individually.

## 2. USE OF THE CFS CONVENING POWER TO SUPPORT MEMBERS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR NATIONAL PATHWAYS/STRATEGIES.

The convening power of the CFS is due to its inclusive multi-stakeholder and intergovernmental composition. This convening power may serve to enhance countries’ efforts with their National Pathways, in different ways.

1. **Adequately connected to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), and together with the UNFSS Coordination Hub, the CFS may serve as an intergovernmental and inclusive platform where interested Members and Participants, on a voluntary basis, present their National Pathways/Strategies, share progress on National Pathways implementation, and exchange experiences, lessons learned, and good practices.**

This exercise could be linked to the Voluntary National Reviews of the 2030 Agenda. This would allow Members and other stakeholders to exchange experiences in National Pathways implementation, map challenges, and encourage collaboration across governments, including South-South and Triangular cooperation, and intra-regional cooperation.

These sessions could also specifically include the (potential) use/relevance of CFS Policy Outcomes in implementation of National Pathways.

### **This may be done:**

- a. Within the annual Plenary;
  - b. At an extraordinary plenary, convened biannually;
  - c. Through a dedicated Special event within the regular plenary week;
  - d. Through plenary week side events;
  - e. At a specific intersessional event, linked to the HLPF.
2. The CFS may foster a **more proactive link with financing and means of implementation (Mol)** in the CFS MYPOW and on these exercises – e.g., through the participation of IFIs and Regional Development Banks and the investors’ community.

**This may be done** at the same space as in #1 above, and/or through a more prominent consideration of Mol in CFS proceedings, and/or fostering this issue at the ECOSOC Financing for Development Forum and Annual meetings of the WB/IMF.



3. **Members could use the science-backed, inclusive global CFS model as an inspiration for their National Dialogues' structure.**
4. **The CFS, through the participation of its Chair or Secretariat, could participate in National Dialogues** and regular meetings with Convenors, organized by the UNFSS Coordination Hub. They may share its HLPE-FSN reports, agreements and outcomes to national stakeholders on this occasion.
5. **CFS Members should remain committed** to the promotion of CFS Policy Outcomes and their use in implementing National Pathways.

To this aim, CFS Members' representatives may connect the CFS with national agencies/institutions that lead Food Systems National Dialogues, and may inform about, and advocate for, the use of pertinent CFS Policy Outcomes for the implementation of their National Pathways.

### **3. ENGAGE WITH THE UNFSS COALITIONS**

The CFS may also use its convening power to **generate and increase momentum in support of the coalitions** that have emerged as a result of the UNFSS.

1. To this effect, the CFS could serve as a platform to **present –and connect- the coalitions, and other multi-stakeholder initiatives** launched at the Summit, and **how they are making specific use of CFS Policy Outcomes**. This will help strengthen and raise awareness of the work of the Coalitions (especially those promoting CFS Policy Outcomes, or those focusing on topics included in the CFS MYPOW), share best practices, and foster connections between existing coalitions.

**This may be done:**

- a. Within the annual Plenary;
  - b. Through a dedicated Special event within the regular plenary week;
  - c. Through plenary week side events.
2. The **coalitions may use CFS Policy Outcomes** as key reference frameworks and **should assist in** disseminating those CFS Policy Outcomes relevant to their objectives. This may be done through:
    - a) A **proactive outreach by the CFS Chairperson, the Secretariat and the HLPE-FSN to the Coalitions;**
    - b) A **commitment by CFS Members and UN entities involved** to foster work of the Coalitions to serve as “vectors” of the uptake of CFS Policy Outcomes.
  3. The **CFS may invite Coalitions to regularly inform CFS Members and other stakeholders** of their progress, including their contributions to the dissemination and uptake of CFS Policy Outcomes, and to discuss opportunities for collaboration.



To this effect, CFS Secretariat, the UNFSS Coordination Hub and the Coalitions may collaborate to carry out a mapping of the existing Coalitions against the CFS Policy Outcomes in order to identify which CFS Policy Outcomes might be more relevant to them.

#### 4. STRENGTHENING THE HLPE-FSN of the CFS

The HLPE-FSN was established in 2009 to give the CFS a solid and independent scientific basis, making it possible to inform political decision-making in a broad and systemic way, including issues of sustainability of food systems and economic and social access to food.

There is no need to “reinvent the wheel”, instead priority may be given to:

1. **Strengthening the existing HLPE-FSN** to improve science-policy interface on food systems.

This may be done through:

- a) **An increased and diversified resource-base** of the HLPE-FSN, including strengthening the financial and human resources contribution of the UN bodies, particularly the RBAs;
- b) **Strengthened dissemination and impact of its reports/publications** through strengthened communication and outreach, for example looking at how the IPCC manages to get massive attention and coverage when they issue a new report. The RBAs may help using their outreach to provide real stories that validate the HLPE-FSN reports and recommendations. The HLPE-FSN policy recommendations have value in themselves and could be communicated directly, before the CFS has negotiated policy convergence tools from them.
- c) **Increased size of its Steering Committee** (currently 15 members) and **broaden the network** of scientists involved in HLPE-FSN reports, also to include policy practitioners to facilitate implementation of the outcomes and recommendations on the ground.
- d) **Broadened review of relevant research** to inform its approach to various workstreams on which it is asked to report. Likewise, HLPE-FSN could invest more effort to consider different sources of knowledge - including grey literature and traditional knowledge of small-scale farmers, local communities and indigenous peoples.
- e) **Developed initiative function** in order to be able to respond to urgent needs/issues, as well as its modeling/foresight work.
- f) **Broaden its thematic scope** to reflect the connections between food systems and food security and nutrition, as reflected in the HLPE-FSN report #15.

UN entities could be more systematically engaged with the HLPE-FSN, in order to ensure that their expertise is available to the HLPE-FSN Steering Committee, without the HLPE-FSN losing any of its independence.

2. **Connecting the HLPE-FSN with other Science-Policy Interfaces** across the UN System

Develop synergies and strengthen links and coordination between existing science-policy interfaces that have useful expertise from a food systems transformation perspective. These include the HLPE-FSN, IPCC, IPBES, OHHLEP (One Health) and the UNCCD SPI.



This could be done:

- a) As a first step, by **organizing joint events** bringing together the SPIs.
- b) Later, by **developing joint flagship reports** on a regular basis.
- c) Connecting the HLPE-FSN to **serve as a platform for other global panels of experts** on FSN and food systems, beyond the UN ones.

To this effect, the HLPE-FSN Secretariat could also map relevant global initiatives and platforms or global panels of experts that are already in place aiming to enhance dissemination of knowledge and scientific evidence in the area of food security and nutrition (e.g. GLOPAN, GNR, IPES-Food, etc.) and increase interaction between them and the HLPE-FSN. This could broaden the capacity as well as the spectrum of activities, evidence-based recommendations, as well as research and analytical capacity of the HLPE-FSN.

The above may also include UN hosted evidence-based initiatives, such as the Hand-In-Hand Initiative geospatial platform. Mapping existing agrifood platforms and coalitions with complementary objectives to those of the CFS, HLPE-FSN could suggest modalities for establishing more continuous relations and dialogues with such platforms. However, HLPE-FSN should not overlap but coordinate with the work of other global and regional panels.

## 5. STRENGTHEN DIALOGUE AND COORDINATION WITH RELEVANT GLOBAL, REGIONAL AND SUB-REGIONAL FORA; AND AMONG REGIONAL AND SUB-REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

1. The CFS and the HLPE-FSN need **more presence in the liaison offices of the RBAs and other UN hubs**, particularly within UN NY and UN Geneva.

For example, the CFS and the HLPE-FSN could consider organizing public events in UN hubs - in collaboration with the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub and other relevant Agencies – at side events and at the HLPF and other major Intergovernmental meetings (e.g. Climate, Desertification and Biodiversity COPs, FAO Conferences).

2. The CFS may explore ways to **strengthen its presence at regional and sub-regional levels**, and opportunities to coordinate with other relevant global bodies.

To this effect, **the role of the CFS Chair** remains critical in engaging with relevant global, regional and sub-regional actors on the work of CFS.

In this regard, **CFS may hold special events, also linked to other major events** (such as G20, G7, G77, COPs, etc.) in order to gather high level political and media interest; and it should also consider organization of events at regional levels, to reach out to regional and national stakeholders.

3. The CFS may also **foster participation in and reinforce collaboration with regional fora**, including UN Regional Sustainable Development Forums, FAO Regional Conferences and other relevant regional events.



4. The CFS **may support the development of regional preparatory events - in advance of CFS plenaries** - where discussions and consultations are grounded in the reality of the countries in order to strengthen the sharing of experiences towards creating of strategic alliances for implementation.
5. Where possible and relevant, there could be **stronger interaction between the CFS and FAO technical committees** that provide policy guidance on issues relating to food security and nutrition, such as the Committee on Agriculture (COAG), the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), the Committee on Forestry (COFO), and the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP).
6. The CFS may **support stakeholders to convene at regional and national levels**.

## 6. REINFORCE COLLABORATION WITH THE UNFSS COORDINATION HUB AND THE UN SYSTEM AT LARGE

1. The CFS should **deepen the collaboration with the RBAs**, as this would also contribute to a more secure resource basis and more scope for action for the CFS.

The CFS Secretariat, working closely with the RBAs, **should strive to link CFS policy outcomes to relevant areas of work of the RBAs and other UN agencies** - for instance, linking CFS policy outcomes with FAO's Operations and FAO's Programme Priority Areas.

The CFS Secretariat, working closely with the UNFSS Coordination Hub, may also do a mapping of existing National Pathways and Coalitions against CFS policy outcomes in order to identify which policy outcomes might be more relevant in each case.

2. **The Coordination Hub may include the CFS Secretariat's participation.** The CFS mechanisms could also act as the intended Hub's Stakeholder Advisory Group.
3. The Coordination Hub could **sensitize FAO Members to use CFS policy outcomes** and build national capacities to deploy them, in relation to National Pathways implementation.
4. To promote implementation of CFS policy outcomes in support of Members' implementation of their National Pathways, **the Coordination Hub could offer concrete guidance to Members how to use CFS policy outcomes** to address their national priorities and to enrich their National Pathways, to strengthen their use in support of nationally led processes.
5. The **Hub Steering Committee could regularly inform the CFS Chair and Members of the contribution of the Hub to the implementation of CFS policy outcomes.**
6. The RBAs could build on **linkages between their operations and CFS policy guidance** - for instance FAO could map CFS policy outcomes to relevant Programme Priorities Areas (FAO).



7. The RBA's expertise could **underpin CFS Policy Outcomes with more practical examples** to assist Members in applying those outcomes and translating them into practical actions.
  
8. The RBAs could **further the presentation of CFS work and policy outcomes to their respective country offices** and carry out a mapping of CFS outcomes against country priorities and country programming frameworks. The RBAs country offices could further facilitate their support to countries in engaging with the HLPE-FSN and the CFS.