

UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food Michael Fakhri
Comments on CFS 2024-2027 Multi-Year Programme of Work (MyPoW)

First Draft June 2023

The Special Rapporteur wishes to thank the CFS chair and the secretariat for the efforts made so far and the continuous work of support, hopefully leading to a coherent and balanced MyPoW outcome, which take in due consideration the three different CFS functions. Please find here below my comments to the first draft.

Strategic function 1- Platform

1) Proposal on the Coordinated policy response to the global food crisis

Unfortunately, this draft is not as focused and coherent as the original draft. Even though we are out of the pandemic, we are instead at a worse stage with the food crisis especially as countries are ending their support measures. Moreover, every country is now experiencing raising levels of debt. There is a risk that CFS thematic workstreams will be irrelevant unless a coherent coordinated response to the food crisis is urgently put in place.

The document refers to biannual, instead of quarterly meetings (although quarterly is still mentioned in the document). However, it does not seem to create the priority that is needed nor to create the coordination that is necessary to overcome and prevent future food crisis. Moreover, there was a certain consensus in favour of merging this workstream with the multilevel governance and localizing SDG2, and we still think this was a good idea.

2) Proposal on the Impact of unilateral coercive measures and other financial and trade restrictions on global food security

The Special Rapporteur supports this proposal, as unilateral coercive measures are at the core of the right to food issues, impacting on food value chains. It goes beyond Russian-Ukraine war and involves countries that have been targeted for years. UCM do not achieve their supposed political goals, while they always cause collective harm against people. UCM are affecting a growing number of people. The Special Rapporteur stresses there should be and there are other multilateral ways to deal with sanctions. For example, recently the ILO for the second time in history through a multilateral process, allowed for sanctioned – in this case against Belarus for attacking trade unions – and this happened through a multi stakeholder discussion. If a dedicated workstream cannot be accepted, the suggestion is for the issue to be tackled in other workstreams.

Strategic function 2 – Policy

3) Policy workstream on promoting Indigenous Peoples' food and knowledge systems and traditional practices.

The Special Rapporteur supports this workstream. However, it would be more effective to mainstream not only Indigenous Peoples' food and knowledge systems, but also the existing relevant legal framework when dealing with land issues, territories, and the use of data. This includes the principle of self-determination and free, prior and informed consent (FPIC). We have seen attempts to undermine the

FPIC principle in different workstreams, unless we try to build coherence on this matter across all the workstreams there will be inconsistencies between the supposed outcome of this specific workstream and other previous CFS products.

4) Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture for FSN

The SR appreciates this topic has been included, however, coherently with the CFS 2014 recommendations he suggests acknowledging the contribution of small-scale fisheries; recognizing their specific contribution to food security and nutrition; promoting and supporting the implementation **of the 'Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication' (VGSSF)**.

In fact, one of the recommendations is explicitly about considering the requirements of small-scale fisheries in the design and implementation of national and international policies and programmes related to fisheries, including investment plans and support local organizations to foster the integration of small-scale fisheries into the decision-making processes.

5) Addressing climate change and biodiversity loss to achieve SDG2.

Th SR regrets this is among the proposals that still need discussion. He wishes to stress again its importance. This is because the food climate agenda is not clear and need to be further defined or better framed in terms which are familiar to the CFS. Food only came onto the climate change COP agenda in the past year and it is still incredibly unclear. The CFS can play an important role providing clarity on the topic. The new biodiversity framework poses good points but also some challenges, particularly on the conservation area. This topic merits a space to improve our understanding and building the momentum to find coherence. Otherwise, the two processes, on climate and biodiversity and on food security risk to continuing to be discussed as separate processes.

Strategic function 3 – uptake

6) In depth debate on enhanced efforts to include global awareness and use of CFS policy outcomes

In our understanding this workstream was intended as a space to stop and to reflect on the uptake, not be in parallel with other workstreams. Now it seems to be a workstream going in parallel with at least another workstream (inequality) and a process (localizing sdg 2). This will weaken its focus and impact. We suggest this should be a stand alone workstream or at least to go in parallel with just one other process or workstreams.