



# REGIONAL FORUM

## ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE UNECE REGION

**Sustainable Food Systems to Build Back Better in Europe and Central Asia –  
Carrying forward the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS)**

### CONCEPT NOTE

#### Background and rationale

---

The outcomes of the United Nations Food Systems Summit reaffirm how food systems can and must play a leading role in addressing all the challenges related to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 and the Paris Climate Change Agreement. The COVID-19 pandemic is a wake-up call for change, an opportunity to "build back better", for a more sustainable, fairer and inclusive food system for people and planet.

Partnership (SDG 17) and collaboration among multiple disciplines and stakeholders across public, private, academic and civil society was evident during the Member State dialogues in ECA, with 23 National Food Systems Transformation Pathways developed (107 in total globally). The discourse

around “food systems” and all aspects of sustainability was elevated. Priority actions to improve food systems covered many aspects including sustainable production, efficient value chains, nutrition and food security, natural resource management (SDG 14, 15), biodiversity, gender equality, social inclusion and leaving no one behind (SDG 5), environmental protection, food loss and waste, trade. People’s awareness and knowledge (SDG 4) of the issues at stake was raised, coupled with increased political will to work more holistically and coherently on agri-food policies.

Efforts to build on the results of the UNFSS, including implementation of national pathways for maximum impact at country level is a priority for countries. Initial actions are being planned including enabling dialogue and information exchange to continue gaining political support to strengthen policy and create space for actions, consideration of the UNFSS Coalitions, resource mobilisation efforts. In parallel, countries highlighted the benefit of regional knowledge and experience exchange, on common policy issues and challenges to ensure that different sectors and disciplines throughout government, and the UN Country Teams continue to work together and realise the full potential of the important results and outcome of the UN Food Systems Summit.

## Session objectives and expected outcomes

---

The main objective of the side event is to provide Member States with an opportunity for a regional knowledge and experience exchange on the implementation of the UNFSS national pathways, as key component of the UNFSS follow-up.

In particular, the expected outcomes are:

1. Member States are informed on the findings of a regional UNFSS stock-take which outlines recurring priority issues, nature and extent of food systems challenges, ongoing initiatives, good practices and workable solutions.
2. Dialogue among national convenors and other stakeholders working on the UNFSS follow-up is facilitated to support the implementation of the UNFSS national pathways

## Organizers

---

**Lead organizers:** Issue-Based Coalition on Sustainable Food Systems (IBC SFS)

**Contributors:** The Chatham House

**Focal points:** Aniko Nemeth /Valeria Rocca

**E-Mail:** [aniko.nemeth@fao.org](mailto:aniko.nemeth@fao.org); [valeria.rocca@fao.org](mailto:valeria.rocca@fao.org)

## Agenda and Structure

---

13.15 - 13.20: **Setting the scene** (Moderator: Mary Kenny, Food Safety and Quality Officer, FAO)

13.20 - 13.30: **Opening** by Raimund Jehle, Co-Chair of the Issue-Based Coalition on Sustainable Food Systems (IBC SFS)

**13.30 - 13.45: Presentation of the findings of the regional stock-take on the UN Food Systems**

**Summit + Q&A** (Laura Wellesley, Senior Research Fellow, Environment & Society Programme, Chatham House)

**13.45 - 14.10: Moderated panel discussion among UNFSS national convenors + Q&A/feedback from the audience**

- ⇒ Ermira Gjerci, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Albania
- ⇒ Dávid Bencsik, Deputy State Secretary for International Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Hungary
- ⇒ Alisher Shukurov, Advisor to the Minister, Ministry of Agriculture, Uzbekistan

**14.10 - 14.40: Ted-style talks (+ Q&A)** with three experts to give an in-depth focus on selected areas of the food systems from the regional stock-take report:

- ⇒ Environmental impacts of food systems (Maxim Vergeichik, Senior Nature Economist, UNDP)
- ⇒ Food Loss & Waste (Kristina Mattsson, Agricultural Policy Analyst, Swedish Board of Agriculture, Sweden)
- ⇒ Promoting women's empowerment in the food systems (Nino Tsilosani, Member of Parliament, Chairperson of the Parliamentary Gender Equality Council, Georgia)

**14.40 - 14.45: Closing** (Moderator)

## List of Panellists

---

Moderator: Mary Kenny, Food Safety and Quality Officer, FAO

Raimund Jehle, Co-Chair of the Issue-Based Coalition on Sustainable Food Systems (IBC SFS)

Laura Wellesley, Senior Research Fellow, Environment & Society Programme, Chatham House

Ermira Gjerci, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Albania

Mr Dávid Bencsik, Deputy State Secretary for International Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Hungary

Alisher Shukurov, Advisor to the Minister, Ministry of Agriculture, Uzbekistan

Maxim Vergeichik, Senior Nature Economist, UNDP

Kristina Mattsson, Agricultural Policy Analyst, Swedish Board of Agriculture, Sweden

Nino Tsilosani, Member of Parliament, Chairperson of the Parliamentary Gender Equality Council, Georgia