

CRITICAL AND EMERGING ISSUES IN FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION TOWARDS A STRATEGIC MYPoW 2020-2023

INTRODUCTION

1. In October 2019, during its 46th Plenary Session, the Committee is expected to consider and endorse its Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPoW) for the period 2020-2023.
2. As defined in Annex B of the Implementation Report of the CFS Evaluation, the first step of the proposed MYPoW process is represented by *“a session in the Plenary dedicated to discussion on critical and emerging issues in the field of food security and nutrition to feed subsequent discussions on the preparation of MYPoW proposals. The purpose of the session is to allow CFS stakeholders to share views and come up with potential issues to be addressed by CFS”*.
3. The document outlining the MYPoW preparation process also clarifies that *“the HLPE note on critical and emerging issues, and other sources such as the RBAs reports, will serve the discussion as background documents”*.

SESSION AT CFS 45

4. With regards to the abovementioned session on *“Critical and Emerging Issues in Food Security and Nutrition – Towards a Strategic MYPoW 2020-2023”*, the document presenting the proposed MYPoW process states that *“on exceptional basis, the session taking place at CFS 45 in 2018 is expected to take a decision on HLPE 2020 report”*. This clause has been added considering that, for the HLPE to deliver a report in 2020, a request has to be presented for endorsement by the CFS Plenary this year (October 2018).
5. Therefore, this agenda item at CFS 45 aims at: setting the stage for the preparation of the MYPoW 2020-2023, and also taking a decision regarding HLPE report in 2020.

HLPE ACTIVITIES IN 2020

6. On 23 July, the Bureau and the Advisory Group are invited to discuss the type of recommendation to be provided to the CFS Plenary regarding HLPE activities in 2020 bearing in mind a number of options and scenarios.
7. Any decision on HLPE activities should be taken considering the indications provided in the Implementation Report of the CFS Evaluation that highlights that *“HLPE activities should be functional to the work of CFS and their selection should be based on a clear understanding of how they are intended to contribute to the objectives of the Committee and feed into its processes”*.
8. The discussion taking place at the Bureau and Advisory Group meeting is intended to inform the decision to be taken by the Bureau on 25 July, in consideration also of the concrete implications behind each scenario.

Scenario A: The HLPE is requested to produce a report in 2020

9. Following the Bureau's decision, CFS stakeholders will be invited to submit proposals concerning potential topics to be addressed by the HLPE, with specific indications concerning the rationale for the inclusion of the thematic workstream in the MYPoW, the expected results and its contribution to the Strategic Objectives, as well as post-endorsement activities to promote the use and application of the CFS policy product.

10. In this regard, the Implementation Report of the CFS Evaluation states that *"the production of HLPE reports/analyses as an inputs/background document for CFS discussions will be based on a clear understanding that, through the Plenary and the Bureau, the report aims to support CFS Member States and other stakeholders in designing strategies and programs for addressing food insecurity and malnutrition, how it will feed into the process considering the timescale, and the availability of information on the subject under discussion"*.

11. Bureau and Advisory Group members may want to consider the 2nd HLPE note on critical and emerging issues for food security and nutrition¹ to see if there are elements that could feed the discussion for the identification of potential issues to be addressed by the Committee. The note is the result of an inclusive process linking the proposed issues to relevant SDGs. The topics suggested by the HLPE include:

- a) Anticipating the inter-connected future of urbanization and rural transformation;
- b) Conflicts, migration and FSN;
- c) Inequalities, vulnerability, marginalized groups and FSN;
- d) Impact of trade on FSN;
- e) Agroecology for FSN in a context of uncertainty and change;
- f) Agrobiodiversity, genetic resources and modern breeding for FSN;
- g) Food safety and emerging diseases;
- h) From technology promises towards knowledge for FSN;
- i) Strengthening governance of food systems for an improved FSN.

Scenario B: The HLPE is requested to carry out alternative activities in 2020 instead of a report

12. In this case, Bureau and Advisory Group members have to identify concrete options concerning the type of activity to assign to the HLPE in line with its mandate,² considering the expected contribution to the work of CFS and to the Strategic Objectives. The format of such alternative options, their expected policy outcome, and their process of elaboration will have to be clearly defined. The cost of production of these alternatives will also have to be determined.

Scenario C: The HLPE is not requested to carry out any activity in 2020

¹ http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/hlpe/hlpe_documents/Critical-Emerging-Issues-2016/HLPE_Note-to-CFS_Critical-and-Emerging-Issues-2nd-Edition_27-April-2017_.pdf

² As per the CFS reform document, the HLPE has been created, as the science-policy interface of CFS, to fulfill the three following functions: "(i) Assess and analyze the current state of food security and nutrition and its underlying causes. (ii) Provide scientific and knowledge-based analysis and advice on specific policy-relevant issues, utilizing existing high quality research, data and technical studies. (iii) Identify emerging issues, and help members prioritize future actions and attentions on key focal areas".

13. This option foresees that no activity is carried out by the HLPE in 2020. There are a number of financial and structural implications that have to be considered, discussed and addressed by the Bureau and the Advisory Group in case it is decided to go in that direction. For instance, what will be the implications for the HLPE Steering Committee? Should they continue to meet twice a year? Should the Steering Committee be renewed?³ Should the mandate of the current Steering Committee be exceptionally extended to one year? Answering these questions might imply a Plenary decision this year, to adjust the current rules guiding the HLPE work set in the CFS Reform Document.

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY THE BUREAU ON 25 JULY

14. The CFS Bureau, at its meeting on 25 July, following the consultation with the Advisory Group, is expected to explore the implications of these three alternative scenarios and to reach consensus on a preferred option in order to inform the decision to be taken by the next CFS Plenary in October 2018 on the HLPE activities in 2020.

³ The process to appoint the next Steering Committee for the forthcoming mandate (October 2019 – October 2021) is supposed to start just after Plenary this year (October 2018).