



CFS47 CONTINGENCY PLANNING

OPTIONS PAPER

Introduction:

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and in compliance with the decrees issued by the Government of Italy and relevant guidelines of the World Health Organization, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation has reduced, postponed or reinvented virtually all of its meetings and events scheduled for the past three months since the outbreak of the disease.

On 19 March 2020, the Committee on World Food Security held the first virtual meeting of the CFS Bureau and ad hoc Advisory Group, and has since convened several other virtual meetings in April and May, with a high degree of stakeholder participation. At its meeting of 17 April, the Bureau opted to forego (proposed fully virtual) negotiations scheduled for mid- and late-May, respectively, on its two ongoing policy convergence processes, and to revisit the issue at a later date.

Building on this experience, the CFS Secretariat has been exploring contingency plans for the weeks and months ahead, including the organization of CFS 47, presently scheduled for 12-16 October 2020.

Three scenarios are hereby presented to consider regarding timing and content of CFS 47, for discussion and decision at the Bureau meeting of 5 June.

Any discussion on the scenarios should take into consideration the evolution of the pandemic, the two ongoing policy convergence processes and their negotiation (modalities and timing), as well as the fact that FAO will determine the use of its facilities for such events as CFS plenary session.

Scenario 1

CFS 47 Plenary session is held **in-person**, from 12 to 16 October 2020, as originally planned, possibly with limited in-person participation, pending FAO decisions on use of its facilities and public health and safety conditions. Specific decisions by FAO on this option will be communicated to CFS Bureau Members and ad hoc Advisory Group members by the CFS Secretariat, after consultations with the Office of the Director-General of FAO. The approved Agenda and Timetable will guide planning for this option, although additional modifications may be made to accommodate more discussion around the implications to global food security of the COVID-19 pandemic. Side events would be organized, though likely fewer, ideally with webcasting available for all plenary sessions and side events, to accommodate “virtual” participants.

Scenario 2

CFS 47 Plenary session is held **virtually** from 12 to 16 October 2020, pending approval of the Office of the Director-General of FAO. The Agenda and Timetable approved by the CFS Bureau will remain in place with possible small adjustments, as in Scenario One. Pending decisions by FAO on use of its meeting rooms and facilities, it may be possible for the CFS Chair, limited Secretariat staffing, and a small number of members/guests to be present in the FAO plenary hall, with the majority of participants linked in using virtual webcasting technologies. This scenario is conceivable if the two policy convergence workstreams are not yet ready for adoption by Plenary.

Scenario 3

CFS 47 is postponed to the first quarter of 2021, to be agreed by CFS Bureau and the FAO DG's office. Rather than lose the chance to highlight CFS's work on food systems and innovations, among other topics, CFS can organize public virtual meetings during World Food Week, 12 to 16 October 2020, with one 3-hour plenary session per day (Tuesday to Thursday), and a limited number of side events can be held immediately before or after these main sessions. Topics for these main sessions could be selected by the CFS Bureau from a list to include such things as: the 2020 SOFI report, the HLPE's 2030 Synthesis report, COVID-19's impacts on SDG-2, the CFS Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises, food system transformation, or agroecological and other innovative approaches for food security and nutrition.