

**CFS Bureau and Advisory Group meeting  
And Bureau meeting**  
**Dates: 04 March 2021 (9:30 – 12:30 and 14:00 - 17:00)**  
**Venue: virtual meeting (via ZOOM)**

## **Bureau and Advisory Group Meeting Outcomes - With Bureau decisions**

### **Agenda**

1. Brief by FAO Fisheries on COFI; FAO Chief Economist on food prices
2. CFS 47 Feedback
3. CFS 48 Provisional Agenda (with Bureau decision)
4. CFS Input to HLPF 2021
5. Monitoring CFS policy recommendations on water and climate change
6. Intersessional events: data systems; inequalities
7. Impact assessment working group
8. Advisory Group reporting exercise
9. Any other business

CFS Chairperson, Mr Thanawat Tiensin, opened the meeting congratulating all participants for the successful delivery of CFS 47, highlighted by the endorsement of the Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition and the adoption of the TORs for the Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

In keeping with the plan to start each Bureau meeting with a short, substantive presentation on an issue of global significance, the Chairperson informed that he had invited the acting head of FAO Fisheries to speak about COFI outcomes, and their relevance to CFS's program of work; and FAO's Chief Economist to give a brief update on the global food price situation.

Last, he informed that under AOB, he had asked the HLPE Coordinator to provide an update on the activities of the HLPE; CSM asked to discuss the UN Food Systems Summit and their open letter on the issue. With these amendments, the Provisional Agenda of the meeting was approved.

## 1. Update by FAO Fisheries on COFI; Chief Economist on food prices

Manuel Barange, acting FAO Fisheries Director, delivered a presentation on the roles of fisheries and aquaculture for reducing poverty and achieving global food security and better nutrition, and informed on the outcomes of the last session of COFI. The presentation highlighted a few key elements on the production and consumption of fish, including an increasing share in global diets of animal proteins and other micronutrients from fish, and an overall historic increase in consumption of fish. With regards to the last session of COFI, he informed that the Committee called upon FAO and COFI Members to insert fisheries and aquaculture issues fully into the United Nations Food Systems Summit, and pointed at some elements in the 2021 COFI Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture that are relevant to the work of CFS.

A presentation by Maximo Torero, FAO Chief Economist, offered an overview of trends in global prices of main food commodities. He pointed that global food prices are at their highest levels for many years, driven mainly by high prices for vegetable oils, cereals, and major commodities like corn. Among various causes, he mentioned the pandemic, international trade barriers, and sustained import demand of certain commodities.

## 2. CFS 47 Feedback

The Secretariat presented preliminary results of the CFS 47 feedback survey. The Bureau and (ad hoc) Advisory Group members commended the Secretariat for a well-organized, first virtual CFS plenary session and noted key highlights including endorsement of the Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition, a dozen excellent side events, approval of Terms of Reference for the CFS workstream on Gender, and engaging discussions on topical issues. With close to 4,500 participants registered for the session and related side events, the Bureau and (ad hoc) Advisory Group members noted that the virtual modality offered an opportunity for wide participation and easy access to recorded sessions, despite challenges for some posed by time zone differences and limited internet connections in some regions and countries.

## 3. CFS 48 Provisional Agenda (with Bureau decision)

The Chairperson introduced the document *CFS 48 Provisional Agenda*, highlighting the special nature of this plenary session. The Secretariat also presented a proposal for eight side events to be held on 3 June with two more to be held on 4 June during the lunch break.

A proposal to possibly include an additional agenda item on the food price crisis partially brought on by the COVID 19 pandemic was discussed.

It was requested that the role of the Rapporteur in presenting the final version of the Policy Recommendations on Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches be included in forthcoming documents prepared for Plenary.

Bureau Members also requested the Secretariat to provide timely information regarding the registration procedures for the session.

### **Bureau decision:**

The Bureau decided that the CFS 48 session would remain focused squarely on approval of policy recommendations on Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches, with no additional substantive items added to the Special Event's agenda. The Secretariat's proposal to organize an application process for ten side events (eight on 3 June, and two on 4 June) was approved. A request was made for the Chair to give priority in the selection process for at least

one side event from among applications received that focuses on the impacts of COVID-19 on food security and nutrition. As a way to tie together the work on COVID-19 done during 2020 by the Committee and its High-Level Panel of Experts, it was suggested that the HLPE Steering Committee apply for one of the ten side event slots to be held as part of CFS 48, in conformity with the open application process the Secretariat will soon publicly announce.

The Bureau agreed to a proposal to extend the time allocated for delegate's interventions to a maximum of 4 minutes per intervention.

#### 4. CFS Input to HLPF 2021

The Chairperson recalled that this item was included in the agenda of the January Bureau meetings whereby the Bureau had agreed to an ad hoc drafting process in order to submit a CFS document before the deadline of 15 March. The Secretary reminded participants that the process described in the approved MYPoW to develop CFS contributions to the HLPF could not be followed as a result of the tight deadline imposed by the President of ECOSOC, the receipt only in mid-December of the original request, and members' disinterest in adding yet another negotiating process on top of the ongoing and demanding VGFSyN process. Nevertheless, the Secretariat had, as discussed in the January Bureau meeting, prepared a draft "Chair's Summary" that: 1) conformed with ECOSOC's instruction; 2) that reflected content drawn from the CFS HLPE's Issues Paper on COVID-19 – consistent with the theme of HLPF 2021; and 3) was preceded by a disclaimer stating the document was not the outcome of policy convergence.

While some Bureau and (ad hoc) Advisory Group members generally agreed with the proposal to share the draft Chair's Summary that conveyed parts of the CFS HLPE Issues Paper on the impacts of COVID 19 on food security and nutrition as the Committee's contribution to HLPF 2021, others expressed concern over sending non-negotiated language – even as a "Chair's Summary" and even if accompanied by a clear disclaimer. Suggestions from the floor included:

- a) Strengthening the preambular disclaimer to ensure that it clarifies the non-negotiated and non-consensus based nature of this CFS contribution to the HLPF 2021;
- b) Drawing from agreed text such as that contained in the newly approved CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition, as well as other relevant CFS agreed policy instruments;
- c) Acknowledging and listing the various work carried out by CFS since the outbreak of the pandemic;
- d) Adding specific comments received by Members on the draft contribution;
- e) Broadening the input to include other areas of work by the Committee beyond its response to COVID, so as to reflect the full scope of CFS's work, including its HLPE.

#### **Bureau meeting:**

The Bureau requested the Secretariat to prepare a revised version of the Chair's Summary, to be shared with Bureau Members by 10 March for non-objection. Such revised document should incorporate suggestions a) through e) above.

#### 5. Monitoring CFS policy recommendations on water and climate change

Bureau and (ad hoc) Advisory Group members welcomed the initiative and commended the Secretariat for the documents prepared.

Some comments were made on how to improve the draft consultation questionnaire/survey so as to narrow its scope and improve the quality of contributions to be received.

Upon request of a member, the Secretariat confirmed the possibility of an extension of the survey deadline to 15 June, which would allow more time for delegations to confer with their home government agencies on these topics.

Bureau members and the (ad hoc) Advisory Group will be asked to distribute the survey among their constituencies, and to respond to the e-consultation by the deadline.

A technical task team, led by the Secretariat, will be formed later this year to help prepare the monitoring event scheduled to take place during CFS 49 in October 2021.

## 6. Intersessional events: data systems; inequalities

CFS Secretariat informed that two separate intersessional events on data systems and on inequalities, respectively, will be organized by the Secretariat with input and support from members of the (ad hoc) Advisory Group.

The first event on data systems is tentatively scheduled for the afternoon of 1 July 2021, while the second event is anticipated for 2022.

As per the approved MYPoW, these thematic events will serve (i) to develop common understanding of the issues and inform the preparation of an HLPE report; and (ii) lay the basis for informed CFS policy convergence work around these two topics.

CFS Secretariat informed that further information on the preparation of the data systems event will be provided in the next Bureau meeting scheduled for April.

CSM requested that both events take place in 2021.

## 7. Impact assessment working group

CFS Chairperson recalled that at its meeting of 27 November 2020, the Bureau had agreed in principle to the Secretariat's proposal to organize an informal working group of Bureau and (ad hoc) Advisory Group members to discuss and consider potential steps aimed at strengthening the impact of CFS policy work at country level. Then, at its January meeting, he recalled, the Bureau requested the Secretariat to provide more information on what such a process would entail.

Responding to comments, CFS Secretariat explained that the objective of this exercise is to brainstorm in an informal setting how to assess the impacts that CFS products have at country level, to see what further steps, if any, are needed to strengthen their impact on ending hunger and malnutrition – consistent with public calls to this effect by the FAO DG and others. Such debate can help inform the Bureau on what is known, and not known about the impacts of CFS policy products and may, at a later stage, help inform decision-making on Secretariat outreach and communications, RBAs programmatic support, and other efforts linked to achieving SDG-2. Secretariat noted its intention to hire a consultant to support the Secretariat with this effort. As needed, Secretariat also pointed out that the RBAs evaluation offices could also be drawn upon for expert advice to help inform discussions of the informal working group.

The Bureau and (ad hoc) Advisory Group members posed questions on objectives, timelines, workload, and potential deliverables. Some Bureau and (ad hoc) Advisory Group members recalled the CFS evaluation process and the agreed voluntary monitoring mechanism which had been debated and agreed by Bureau and plenary. Some also suggested that the informal working group should meet first, and determine what, if any, further steps should be presented to the Bureau for additional decisions.

Last, a request was made to broaden participation of any informal working group beyond just Bureau members, to include other members of CFS.

**Bureau meeting:**

The CFS Bureau agreed that a first meeting of an informal working group would be convened by the CFS Chair and Secretariat, with the intention of further discussing this matter within an informal working group before a further discussion on the topic at the next Bureau meeting. It was further agreed that participation in this informal working group would be extended to all CFS Members, as well as Bureau and the (ad hoc) Advisory Group.

## 8. Advisory Group reporting exercise

CFS (ad hoc) Advisory Group members presented the main points from the reports of their activities concerning the period January-December 2020. Special attention was given to the key role of (ad hoc) Advisory Group members in raising awareness on CFS activities and supporting implementation of CFS policy products among their constituencies, with a view to promoting their uptake and impact at regional, national and local levels. More specifically, in relation to the recently-endorsed Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition (VGFSyN), several (ad hoc) Advisory Group members expressed their interest in collaborating and providing technical support to convert policy recommendations agreed in Rome into concrete actions and projects on the ground.

## 9. AOB

HLPE Coordinator provided an update on activities of the CFS HLPE, including the process of renewal of its Steering Committee, and preparation of reports on Youth, Data systems, and Inequalities.

CFS Chairperson informed about an open letter he received from the CSM that expressed concerns about the organization of the UN Food Systems Summit. The Chairperson noted that he had shared the letter with the UNFSS Special Envoy.

## Annex 1: Attendance list Bureau and Advisory Group meeting (to be updated)

### CFS Bureau Members:

Mr Thanawat Tiensin (CFS Chair / Thailand); Ms Wajiha Qazizadah, Ms Valentina Vitale (Afghanistan); Mr Felipe Carlos Antunes (Brazil); Ms Berioska Morrison, Ms Diana Infante (Dominican Republic); Mr Bommakanti Rajender (India); Ms Agnes Rosari (Indonesia); Ms Traoe Halimatou Kone (Mali); Mr Don Syme (New Zealand); Mr Ilya Andreev (Russian Federation); Mr Baye Mayoro Diop (Senegal); Mr Rafael Osorio (Spain); Mr Sean Cox, Mr Paul Welcher (United States).

### CFS Bureau Alternates:

Mr Guillermo Spika (Argentina); Ms Mi Nguyen (Canada); Ms Paula Peraza Aguilar (Costa Rica); Ms Delphine Babin-Pelliard (France); Mr Tim Kränzlein (Switzerland).

### Advisory Group:

Mr Maximo Torero Cullen, Mr Mark McGuire (FAO), Mr Shantanu Mathur, Mr Sundeep Vaid (IFAD); Ms Stephanie Hochstetter, Mr Jacopo Valentini (WFP); Ms Stineke Oenema, Alessandra Mora (UNSCN); Mr Rodney Cooke (CGIAR); Mr Fabrizio Moscatelli (Gates Foundation); Mr Martin Wolpold-Bosien, Mr Andre' Luzzi, Ms Marion Girard, Mr Luca Bianchi, Ms Nora McKeon, Mr Saul Vincent, Ms Nettie Wiebe, Ms Teresa Maisano, Ms Mariam (CSM); Mr Brian Baldwin (PSM); Mr Michael Fakhri (SR RtF); Ms Marzella Wustefeld (WHO).

### Observers:

Mr Hans Hoogeveen (Netherlands); Ms Silke Stralkamp (Germany); Mr Damien Kelly (EU); Ms Federica Veschi, Ms Supajit Sriariyawat, Ratchnok (Thailand); Ms Giulia De Castro (WFO).

### CFS Secretariat:

Mr Chris Hegadorn (Secretary), Mr Evariste Nicoletis (HLPE Coordinator), Ms Françoise Trine, Mr Emilio Colonnelli, Ms Elise Benoit, Mr Fabio Isoldi, Ms Chiara Cirulli, Mr Waiganjo Njoroge, Ms Sylvia Orebi, Ms Giorgia Paratore.

## Annex 2: Attendance list Bureau meeting (to be updated)

### CFS Bureau Members:

Mr Thanawat Tiensin (CFS Chair / Thailand); Ms Valentina Vitale (Afghanistan); Mr Felipe Carlos Antunes (Brazil); Ms Diana Infante (Dominican Republic); Ms Agnes Rosari (Indonesia); Ms Traore Halimatou Kone (Mali); Mr Don Syme (New Zealand); Mr Ilya Andreev (Russian Federation); Mr Baye Mayoro Diop (Senegal); Mr Rafael Osorio (Spain); Mr Sean Cox, Mr Paul Welcher (United States).

### CFS Bureau Alternates:

Mr Guillermo Spika (Argentina); Ms Mi Nguyen (Canada); Ms Paula Peraza Aguilar (Costa Rica); Ms Delphine Babin-Pellier (France); Ms Hyo Joo Kang (Republic of Korea); Mr Tim Kränzlein (Switzerland).

### Observers:

Mr Hans Hoogeveen (Netherlands); Ms Silke Stralkamp (Germany); Mr Damien Kelly (EU); Ms Federica Veschi, Ms Supajit Sriariyawat, Ratchnok (Thailand).

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